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A TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE WITH COMPOSITION.
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THIS COURSE DESCRIPTION RECOUNTS A FOURTH-GRADE TEACHERS EXPERIENCE OF MOTIVATING AND ASSISTING INNER-CITY SLUM CHILDREN TO DEVELOP COMPOSITION SKILLS AND INCLUDES THE THREE UNITS SHE TAUGHT--(1) "LEARNING TO BE SPECIFIC" AND "LEARNING TO DESCRIBE SENSE IMPRESSIONS," (2) "LEARNING TO DESCRIBE PEOPLE," AND (3) "PLAYING WITH WORDS." INDIVIDUAL LESSONS IN THESE UNITS CONTAIN STATEMENTS OF SPECIFIC AIMS, DESCRIPTIONS OF TEACHING PROCEDURES, BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATIONS OF WRITING MODELS UTILIZED, TRANSCRIPTIONS OR SUMMARIES OF TEACHER-CLASS DIALOGUES PRELIMINARY TO WRITING, AND REPRINTS OF GROUP- AND INDIVIDUALLY-AUTHORED STUDENT COMPOSITIONS. A GENERAL INTRODUCTION BY WALLACE W. DOUGLAS AND THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL UNITS PROVIDE THE READER WITH GUIDANCE IN UNDERSTANDING THE RATIONALE OF THE INSTRUCTION AND IN INTERPRETING THE STUDENT COMPOSITIONS. SEE ALSO TE 000 124 AND TE 000 126 THROUGH TE 000 129. (RD)

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WITH COMPOSITION

TE000 124

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A Teacher's Experience With Composition

Northwestern University
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Introduction

Shepard Elementary School, where this unit was prepared and used, is what is currently known as an "inner city school." It is in the North Lawndale Section of Chicago, which is a port-of-entry for Southern Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. In other words, it is a ghetto of the least advantaged of all the ghettoized residents of the city.

The culture of North Lawndale is not urban, not middle class, not settled, not "moral,"[1] nor provident, and so forth--in a word it is not everything that the American public school is set up to represent and develop.

The children in Room 308 in the Shepard School are often improperly clothed and fed. Some of them are likely to fall asleep because they cannot sleep at night "with all the other kids in the bed." Some get stomach aches from not eating, others cry from cold. Recently one of the boys said to the teacher, "Mrs. Nesper, my feet hurt bad, they hurt real bad." For two days he had been coming to school in shoes with no soles.

The intelligence quotients of the children range between 61-112; the median score is 93. On the language portion of the California Achievement Test the range was 1.2 to 4.2; the median was 3.1.

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[1] "Demoralized" is the proper word. American slavery was remarkably successful in destroying Negro cultural and societal forms, especially the family unit. The success has been continued in the modern ghetto. See Stanley Elkins, Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life (Chicago 1959).

The lessons in The Third Thing: A Teacher's Experience With Composition should be viewed as preliminary and preparatory to later more systemic exercises in writing. The lessons expose the students to the initiating activities of the writing process. Or perhaps they can be described as drawing the children into the fabric of the writing-set. Here teaching is carried on by demonstrative, illustrative practice; learning is achieved by participation.

Obviously the success of the lessons--and it seems to me to have been considerable--depended to a great extent on the non-technical (but by no means irrelevant) fact that the teacher, Mrs. Osanna Nesper, was able to extend significant amounts of supportive energy to the children. She seems to have been able to establish precisely that kind of rapport--or just contact--which is the basis of all composition teaching.

Some notice must also be given to Mrs. Nesper's technique, her management of the writing experience. First, she treated writing as a thing of value in itself. The exercises were not means to improve the children's "use of English" or to teach them "good English." They were rather and simply guided experiences in composing communications. Thus she removed much of the threat that fills the ordinary writing class.[2] Second, she began by using the class as agent: she turned the group into the composer. Thus she managed to give these exercises some of the cooperative quality that is characteristic of most real writing situations. Third, she made reading an integral and functional part of the writing exercise. The models gave the children a point of reference; the discussion of the models became, in fact, the first or accumulative stage in the total writing process.

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[2] Cf. William G. Perry, "The 600-word Theme and Human Dignity," College English, XIV (1954), 354-60.

On this third point, Mrs. Nesper's own comment may be the most useful. She notes that the question and answer periods, which are apparently so drill-like and old-fashioned, really provided the only means to draw from children such as hers their ideas about the passages. Their previous experiences in written expression had been restricted to spelling assignments and to answering simple information-questions, designed to test their comprehension, and generally handled by a word or a simple phrase. Here, however, the questions were designed not as little tests but as an aid to composition. They were a means of discovery, of finding what was "in" the subjects that could be used in composition. The discussions following the apparent inquisitions, Mrs. Nesper reports, allowed each child the opportunity to profit from the reading of the others, including the teacher. The children listened, read, interrupted, organized ideas, and then wrote.

It is interesting that this discussion of the literary passages created some interest in the children, motivated them to further reading, as the saying goes. The children asked questions like the following:

"Mrs. Nesper, can I get that book downstairs in the library?"

"Do you think I could get The Good Master from Mrs. Wilkerson?"

"If I ask the library teacher to save Homer Price for me, do you think she'd do it?"

At the end of the unit, many children skimmed through the books; eight youngsters read each of the books that selections were drawn from.

The children's evaluations of the units show not only some degree of satisfaction but also a good deal of essential learning.

Stanley: "I won't say I enjoyed it because it was so very hard. I would rather you give us a topic, then I could copy something out of a book and that would be it."

Sammy: "Well, I'd rather you give us no writing assignment because it takes too much time to write."

Stanley: "I will say this much, I had to sweat to write all my compositions. You know, I had to think and put things in order and that just takes too much time. You have to think, did I say what I really wanted to say if someone read it, would they really know what I wanted to say?"

Ronald: "I think that was the hardest part. I'd write something and I know what I wanted to say, but I just wasn't able to write it the way I wanted it."

Gylda: "I enjoyed it, because I could write what I wanted to write and I could say what I wanted to say. But I wouldn't call it easy work, you have to think a great deal before you get started."

Sara: "I don't write so good, but it was easier writing when the teachers gave me the topics and then we could write any old thing. Now it's all different, now I have to think, is this the beginning, is this the middle, is this the end, and if someone walked in here and read it, would they really know what I wanted to say?"

Michael: "I really enjoyed writing not because it was easy, but because I could really write what I wanted to."

Sammy: "Well, my only complaint is--you have to think too long, I just like to copy something in a hurry and hand it in."

Sandra: "I think what I liked best was the stories you read us. You know, I am reading Charlotte's Web now."

Stanley: "I enjoyed the work we did with the words, we learned lots of nice, long, colorful words."

Sammy: "Well, I guess you could say we are learning lots of things about writing, but I love to read the books that you read. I read all about *The Good Master*--boy was that a good story."

Perhaps the best comment on the whole unit is the response of some of the children to Mrs. Nesper's question, "How shall we continue our work in composition?"

Sara: "Well, whatever you do, don't give us a topic to write about."
Sammy: "Just go on reading from books--do what you have been doing."
Stanley: "Do it the new way, we've learned a lot."

One final word. In many school rooms there will be displays of neat and correct spelling papers, or well copied exercises in penmanship. In Mrs. Nesper's room the display could be of real compositions by the children. For somehow or other she has managed to transform the writing of compositions from a schoolroom exercise into a valid experience of communication between human beings in a social context.

Wallace W. Douglas

Note: The material in these lessons is adapted from *Some Lessons in the Basic Processes of Composition*, produced by the Curriculum Center in English, Northwestern University.

UNIT I

Part 1
Learning to be Specific

Unit I, A Teacher's Experience in Composition is grounded in the Basic Processes of Composition, units for seventh and eighth grades. Part 1, as the title suggests, emphasizes the difference between classification and individualization. The teacher does not use terminology except as she finds the students can benefit from it. The vocabulary lists should be adapted for each class.

"In a valley near the foothills..." to "...called him Angelino."

The complete model will be found on page 9 of Angelino and the Barefoot Saint by Valenti Angelo (New York: The Viking Press, 1961).

Lesson 1

Specific Aim: To have pupils compose a group introductory description of a person that will, indirectly, emphasize the importance of concrete, specific details.

Procedure: Duplicate the paragraph for distribution. Allow the pupils to read the selection silently. If necessary, read it orally for greater clarity. Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: foothills, Alps, Tuscany, exceedingly.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: Who is being introduced? Whom are we meeting?

Reply: A boy called Angelo.[1]

Ask: Where does this boy live? (You might show this area on the wall map to make it more meaningful.)

Reply: In a valley near the Alps.[2]

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[1] The questions and answers are relatively verbatim reports. Some of the answers are summaries or types.

[2] Note the number of details omitted in the answer. The objective of these lessons is, in effect, to encourage children to see, remember, and use particulars.

Ask: How old is this boy?

Reply: Ten years old.

Ask: What words describe his body?

Reply: (1) Small

(2) Slender

Ask: Think of the other words the author could have used to convey the same image.

Reply: (1) short

(2) tiny

(3) thin

(4) skinny

Ask: What kind of boy was Angelino?

Reply: He was a good boy, a very good boy.

Ask: How do you know this? How does the author describe the boy's personality?

Reply: (1) quiet

(2) good-natured

(3) friendly

(4) gentle

(5) simple heart

Ask: Do you think he was well liked?

Reply: (1) Yes, because he was quiet.

(2) Yes, because the people had a special name for him--Angelino.

Ask: How did the family make a living?

Reply: They owned a small farm that they planted and harvested each year.

Ask: Was this a rich or poor family?

Reply: Poor.

Ask: How can you be sure they were poor? What words tell you that they were poor?

Reply: (1) scant supply of food, just enough to sustain the family . . . in spite of their poverty.[3]

(2) "The boy was small and slender--this probably means he didn't have much to eat."

Say: We have been introduced to Angelo. Do you think we can introduce one of the boys in our community to Angelo?

Preparation for writing:

I led the class through a review: "Here we have a boy called Angelo. He is a special boy with some very interesting characteristics. Let's make a list on the chalk board of all the things we were told about Angelino."

Angelo's name was written on the chalk board, and all the identifying information placed under his name. We then talked about the boy we planned to describe. The boy they decided upon was one that had been causing them trouble. (A younger but larger child than those in the class; he would report to his mother that children in the class had beaten him up. She would complain to the principal.) It appeared that the class was using this description to expose him to the school and community. They were going to warn others to stay away from him.

All the qualities and characteristics that were suggested were placed upon the chalk board. The suggestions came too fast for the boy who was writing them on the board. He asked if he could put them down on the side chalk board as notes (i.e. not full sentences). When the list was completed, the class discovered that some of the details were diametrically opposed to others, and some were repetitious. They finally decided upon the characteristics they wished to include in the description. Then, without prompting, they proceeded to put these items into sentences, which were written on the front chalk board just as the children dictated. Some of the pupils became concerned about the order of sentences and still others said "but is that what we really want to say? . . . haven't we said that already? . . . would this description be clear to someone who walked in and read it now?

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[3] The answer is based on material from another book. It was supplied by a ten-year-old who is a wide reader.

The Group Composition was revised several times before they agreed upon its final form. It is interesting that the children very soon thought of an invented audience and communication. They kept asking whether they were being clear, or whether they were saying what they wanted to. Eventually Ronald summarized the problem by saying something like, "Would someone coming into the room know what we mean when he reads our composition?"

Group Composition:

In the city of Chicago, on Whipple Street, there lived a boy named James Bond.[4] He was a troublesome, noisy boy who was always in and out of trouble. He was fat for his age because he was always eating something. He didn't have any friends because his mother was always meddling with the other kids on the street.

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[4] The lesson took place around the time when a national magazine carried on the cover a cut of the goldpainted lady of Goldfinger.

"It was barely daylight when Little Georgie..." to "...and shrilled and mocked one another."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Little Georgie Sings a Song," pp. 35-36 of Rabbit Hill by Robert Lawson (New York: The Viking Press, 1956).

Lesson 2

Specific Aim:

To have pupils compose a group description of a trip or journey. Again the technical objective is centered upon details.

Procedure: Duplicate the paragraph for distribution. All the pupils should be allowed to read the selection silently; then the teacher should read it aloud for greater understanding. Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: nourishing, knapsack, mounting, chorus.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: Who is going on a journey?

Reply: Little Georgie.

Ask: What time of day is it?

Reply: Barely daylight.

Ask: How did Mother feel about his traveling?

Reply:[1] (1) She was worried.

(2) . . . worried . . . in spite of her worrying she made a mourishing lunch.

(3) She made a healthy lunch . . . a well-balanced lunch--even though she was worried.

Ask: Where was Little Georgie going?

Reply: To Uncle Analdas

Ask: Why do you think Father went along as far as the Twin Bridges?

Reply: (1) He was brave and bold and worried.

(2) He was worried like Mother.

(3) Maybe this was his way of saying good-bye.

Ask: How did the author describe their steps, their movements--the way they walked?

Reply: They stepped briskly, speedily, quickly, hurriedly, fast.

Ask: Where were they going in such a hurry?

Reply: They were going down the Hill to Twin Bridges.

Say: "The valley was a lake of mist on which rounded treetops swam like floating islands."

Ask: What does this mean? What picture do you see from this description?[2]

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[1] Note the variation in number of details in the answers. #2 is a kind of summary of various short answers; it was made by a girl with an I.Q. in the low seventies.

[2] If the teacher finds the class floundering, she can compare a fog to a mist. For example: During the fall of the present school year there were several very foggy mornings, so foggy in fact, the children had difficulty identifying their friends on the playground. Their classroom was on the third floor, and they could not see the buildings directly across from the school building.

Reply: Well, they must be on a high hill if they can see the tops of the trees. The mist is probably a fog--when you can't see the tops of buildings and when you can barely make out the cars on the streets.

Ask: Why does the author say . . . "the whole valley was a lake of mist . . ."

Reply: Because you can't see through a mist or a lake.

Ask: Why does the author say . . . "rounded treetops swam like floating islands"?

Reply: Because they are sticking up through the fog. It's all they can see as they walk down the hill.

Ask: What picture do you have in your mind as Father and Little Georgie walk down the hill?

Reply: They are walking fast. The valley can't be seen because of the mist, but they can see the tops of the trees.

Ask: Do they hear anything as they walk?

Reply: (1) They hear the birds singing.

(2) They hear the birds that live in the orchards.

Ask: What words were used to describe what the mother birds were doing?

Reply: (1) chirped

(2) chuckled

(3) scolded

(4) swept

(5) tidied the nests

Ask: What did the author call the father birds or male birds?

Reply: Men-folk

Ask: What did the "men-folk" do while the women-folk worked?

Reply: (1) warbled

(2) shrilled

(3) mocked one another

Say: (or draw this summary from the pupils)

We have read about Little Georgie who is leaving home. His Mother packed a knapsack lunch, but she is very worried about his safety. Father walked along with him and as they walked down the hill, they heard the birds in the orchards and they saw the mist in the valley.

Preparation for writing:

I asked, "Could we use one of our actual adventures or experiences and relate it as Georgie's adventure was?"

Stanley raised his hand and said, "Yes, I went to Sears." Another pupil asked, "Would you call that an adventure?" "Yes," was the reply from many of the pupils. Stanley told how and why he went to Sears. From the information given, sentences were constructed to describe this adventure as accurately as possible. Again there were periods of questions and answers--students asked, "Stanley, what happened on the way to Sears? . . . how did the candy counter smell? . . ." They constructed, revised, erased, and reconstructed until they had written a composition that satisfied them.

Group Composition:

A childless lady asked me to go to Sears with her. I went and asked my Mother for permission and she said yes. Mother said, "While you are at the store, buy me some chocolate candy."

We went to the Sears Bank first and then to the candy counter. After we got home the woman gave me fifteen cents and my Mother gave me a dime. I was very pleased.

"The barn was very large...." to "...the cows and the horses and the sheep."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Escape," page 13 of Charlotte's Web by E. B. White (New York: Harper and Row, 1952).

Lesson 3

Specific Aim: To have students compose a group description of a place, with emphasis on details suggesting a feeling.

Procedure: Duplicate the passage for distribution. Read the selection silently, and have a pupil read it aloud.[1] Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: loft.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: What are we concerned with in this description?

Reply: (1) a barn

(2) a barn that is old and smelly

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[1] By this lesson pupils seemed to be ready to profit from having selections read by one of themselves.

Ask: What does this barn look like?

Reply: (1) it is large

(2) it is old

(3) an old, ugly, stinky barn

Ask: What makes this barn different from other farm buildings?

Reply: (1) maybe its smells make it different

(2) maybe the smells and the animals that live in it make it different

Ask: Well, just what did it smell like?

Reply: (1) perspiration of horses

(2) manure

(3) cow's breath

(4) grain

(5) harness dressing

(6) axle grease

(7) rubber boots

(8) new rope

(9) sometimes fish

(10) hay

(11) smelled of peace--"as though nothing bad could happen ever again in the world"

Ask: Do you think these smells were all pleasant or unpleasant?

Reply: No! Some are very unpleasant, nasty!

Ask: Which would be unpleasant to you?

Reply: (1) perspiration

(2) manure

(3) harness dressing

(4) axle grease

(5) fish

(6) rubber boots

Ask: Which then, would be pleasant?

Reply: (1) sweet breath of cows

(2) new rope

(3) hay

(4) (perhaps) "sort of a peaceful smell as though nothing bad could happen"

If not, ask them: What about this "peaceful smell"? What kind of a smell might it be?

Reply: Neither pleasant or unpleasant, neither bad or good, but a smell that makes you think this is a safe place to be.

Ask: Is this a friendly or unfriendly place?

Reply: Friendly.

Ask: How do you know this? What does the author say? What words does he use to indicate that this is indeed a nice place to live?

Reply: Well, it is a large barn with enough room for all the animals and plenty of hay and grain for food.

Ask: When the author writes--"a sort of peaceful smell"--he is trying to say something; what do you think it is?

Reply: A peaceful smell probably comes from a place where there is no trouble or fights or arguments. A place like this would be a pleasant place to live.

Ask: Where might we find a place like this for ourselves?

Reply: (1) school

(2) park and playground, social center

(3) church

(4) home

Preparation for writing:

When the children were asked about a place that they had visited—a place of security, peace, perhaps odorous--they were hesitant to reply. One child said he had been to a classmate's house that smelled wonderfully of old pipe tobacco and gas, but the classmate was so deeply offended the suggestion had to be dropped. Some of the other responses were an airplane, motel, and hotel. The hotel suggestion was chosen because it was a place in their city. Larry, the boy who suggested the subject, related a very interesting story--he and his mother had actually lived in a hotel for a year. He liked this kind of living: it was clean, quiet, private and yet he had many friends to play with. Although he could verbalize his attitudes and reactions, he would not allow anyone to include it in the description. The paragraph was constructed by the pupils, but Larry was extremely cautious in allowing anything to be included that might exhibit his personal reactions to this period of his life.

Group Composition:

> A mother and her one year old baby lived on the fifth floor of the Gray Hotel. The baby had a room of his own and the mother had a room down the hall. He had plenty of playmates from the other apartments in the hotel. They played records and watched television while their mothers worked in the lobby. A waitress would serve these children food in their rooms. The children's mothers went in and out to make sure the children were all right.

It seemed obvious that the boy's own cautions and restraints had dominated the composing process, and the result was by no means as lively or communicative as the previous work. So the next day, after the class had been on a field trip to the Museum of Science and Industry, I re-read the model.

After the selection was read again, there were a few moments of silence. Finally, Sammy said, "How about this room of ours? It smells of lots of things, and it protects us from the weather, and we are warm in here." Others picked up where Sammy left off and all the things that identified "our" room were listed on the chalk board. The pupils asked me to re-read the selection so that they could pattern their sentences after the model. Stanley suggested I take a back seat while he and Sammy took over as class secretary and discussion leader. The following composition resulted from this lesson.

Group Composition: (second)

The school room was very large and old. It smelled of chalk dust and children's clothes. It often had a quiet smell--as if nothing bad could happen in school. It smelled of pencil lead, ink, paste, water-color paints, and crayons. Whenever it rained or snowed, the wet coats and boots in the dressing room smelled like a skunk. When the children walked into the room, it smelled like potato chips, candy, nuts, and pumpkin seeds. Most of the time it smelled like smoke and dust. The dust came from the windows. The smoke came from the chimneys.

"Here in Cranbury it was nice...." to "...and new-cut grass."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "The Pyes Without Pinky," page 13 of Pinky Pye by Eleanor Estes (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1958).

Lesson 4

Specific Aim: To re-enforce learning from previous lesson.

Procedure: Duplicate the selection for distribution. Read silently and orally.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: What was the name of the town?

Reply: Cranbury

Ask: How did the author describe the town?

Reply: Nice.

Ask: How else could he have described it? What other words could he have used?

Reply: (1) pleasant

(2) happy

(3) wonderful

Ask: Why was it so nice in Cranbury?

Reply: Well it was nice for lots of reasons:

(1) it smelled like the sea

(2) after a rain storm it had a wonderful smell--a clean smell

(3) it was nice to ge barefoot in the wet, newly cut grass

Ask: What is a gutter? (If they don't know, use the dictionary.)

Ask: How does the rain water sound as it moves down the gutters?

Reply: The water "gurgled merrily." The water moved:

(1) fast

(2) swiftly

(3) rushed

(4) rapidly

Ask: What is a gurgling sound?

Reply: When the water runs fast down through the drains in a sink or tub.

Ask: Why do you think the author describes the rain water as "swift rain water racing to the drains"? (What do you think he means by drains? Use dictionaries if necessary.)

Reply: They must have had a heavy rain, such as when it just pours in sheets and all this water went to the drains where it was backed up.

Ask: What does the water carry along to the sewers?

Reply: (1) papers

(2) sticks

(3) garbage

(4) junk

Draw a summary from the class. Guide the discussion so that the children think of their own experiences.

Preparation for writing:

The children were eager to relate some of their experiences in the rain, but were hesitant when I suggested we use one of them for our group composition. Stanley added, "If you don't mind, Mrs. Nesper, I'd like to write my own story today." Sammy then said, "I'll tell you a story, but I won't write it. I will tell you about my new bike." Slowly the story took shape; some pupils helped with sentence construction and still others became involved in revisions. In the final analysis, Sammy's story was written with the help of his classmates.

Group Composition:

On a rainy Saturday while I was eating chili, my Uncle Eugene rode to my house on a bicycle. After I ate, I went on the back porch and leaned over the banister and what do you think I saw? I saw my older brother, wringing wet from rain, riding on a girl's bicycle.

When I waw this, I raced down the stairs and told him to get off. I told him, "Mother wants you to eat." When he heard this, he jumped off the bike and started to run upstairs. I jumped on the bike and rode away. I paddled along swiftly looking for broken glass. When I found piles of glass, I rode through it over and over again. And what do you think happened--I got a flat in the front tire. I was satisfied and pleased with myself. When I told my uncle, he didn't do anything but stare.

Finally he said if you fix it, you can have it. And I never did get over the joy of owning a bike.

Note: Sammy, who was writing the composition at the board, became worried because the "paragraph" seemed to be getting too long. I told him to go ahead, that maybe we could go back and fix it up later. Later, though, Darrell and Gylda pointed out slight changes in subject and suggested indentions. Apparently the paragraph-sense is developed in oral-reading exercises in the primary grades.

Individual Compositions:

The first attempts at individual compositions developed after Lesson 4. Some children asked if I thought they could write something on their own. I told them that I would like to read their papers. They started writing in class, went on for about half an hour, until the dismissal bell. I gave them some help. For example, most had some trouble getting a way to start. After I suggested they write just what they would say in telling me, they went ahead. I managed to give some individual suggestions too.

The next day those who had finished papers dropped them on my desk or handed them to me as they came into the room. I first read the papers to myself. Then I said that I would like to read some of them aloud; I asked one of the boys if he would mind if I started with his. Needless to say I read what I took to be the writer's intention; that is, I pronounced mis-spelled words as if spelled correctly, I tried to observe missing punctuation marks, and pronounced missing forms such as s in "senitive" or -ed in "pretenit."

As I read there were various suggestions for revisions, sometimes from the writers themselves, sometimes from other children. The suggestions were made without hostility, perhaps because the papers were read for their content not as examples of "bad English."

> Last year at Shepard School it looked like a junk yard. My teacher and two of the children helped clean the yard. I can see some of the paper and sticks sometimes now. My teacher said that they picked up candy papers, peanut bags, sticks, and pop cans. Sometimes she said, the rain would wash the sticks, pop cans in the sand which has turned into mud.
>
> --Harriet Collins

Sometimes when a rain storm is over, children come over to the Shepard School yard and pull off their shoes and play in the muddy water. They sometimes try to do chin-ups without falling into the water. Some of them try to get a swing without falling into the water. But anyway they have lots of fun.

--Stanley Brooks

i

A policeman blew his whistle and it sounded like a bird singing a song in the morning. The policeman looked like a puppet as he stopped the cars.

The men from the rocket ship found many things on the moon to bring back to earth. There were plants and trees and insects among the things they brought back.

ii

When the policeman blew his whistle, it sounded like a bird singing, a song in the morning. The policeman was wearing a navy blue outfit and his badge was shining. He had a police car around the corner. The police car was blue and white. His whistle was shining, too.

iii

A train is like a big long snake running around on two lines with people in its back. Buses are like white and green caterpillers. Sometimes buses are orange caterpillers with children inside at back. Taxicabs are like yellow and green bugs. Sometimes cabs look like green checker bugs.

An airplane is like a giant eagle, roaming around in the sky. The wheels are like his feet. The nose is like his mouth and the front windows are his eyes and the two wings on the back are his tail. The propellers are like fish he had turning around and around and the fuselages are like marks on it.

--Michael Covington

i

One day after there was a rain storm I was going to my friends house. There was a puddle of water on the side of the street. In the water I saw some sticks that looked like boat houses. I saw chewing gum papers that looked like boats. I saw an orange peeling that looked like a little house. I saw children putting dirt in the water--making mud pies. The air smelled clean and fresh. In front of my friends house I saw a piece of cardboard with paper-gum and sticky green candy that made it look like a little island in front of my friends house.

ii

When I was going to the store I saw a car running down the street as it groaned, snorted and screeched. Then I saw another car, and it was tired and worn so it couldn't run. Suddenly a man fixed it and the car started to run. It raced with another car that was ahead of him.

--Sandra Hall

After a heavy rain storm, Shepard School looked like a junk yard. The sticks looked like boats and the gum papers looked like men swimming, the glass looked like fish in the water and the rocks looked like boulders.

--Ronald Saulter

When I looked down to Shepard School grounds after the rain has fallen, I see some water in a circle like a pond. And gum wrappers look like large boats and all this put together looks like a very beautiful island.

--Iris D. Ocasio

After a rainy day my friends Larry and Ronald were walking past Shepard School playground. Larry said to Ronald, "Look at Victor in the school yard with his shoes and socks off!" Ronald and Larry and Victor had a swing. They splashed the water everywhere. Larry, Ronald and Victor went to their houses very wet. They had fun at Shepard playground. Do you have fun at Shepard School playground? Look! the sun is coming out.

--Michael Holifield

"Charlotte stood quietly over the fly,..." to "...proven loyal and true to the very end."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Charlotte," page 41 of Charlotte's Web by E. B. White (New York: Harper and Row, 1952).

Lesson 5

Specific Aim: To practice describing a feeling.

Procedure: Distribute passage. Have it read silently and aloud. Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: brutal, scheming, "in good time," proven, loyal.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: How does Wilbur describe Charlotte?

Reply: Fierce, brutal, scheming, blood-thirsty, foxy[1], and conniving.[1]

---

[1] Note the words added by pupils.

Ask: What does Wilbur consider her good qualities?

Reply: She is clever and pretty.

Ask: What does the author say about Wilbur's doubts and fears?

Reply: (1) Wilbur's fears are common among those who make new friends.

(2) You wonder if it is good or bad.

(3) You may wonder if this new friend is a troublemaker or a peacemaker.

Say: We know how Wilbur felt about Charlotte, but how does the author feel about her?

Reply: He says she would be a true and loyal friend. She had an ugly body, but a kind heart.

Ask: Was it natural for Charlotte to eat a fly?

Reply: Yes, she was a spider.

Ask: Why did Wilbur lie down and close his eyes?

Reply: (1) He didn't sleep much.

(2) He was tired.

(3) He didn't want to see Charlotte eat the fly.

(4) He was chicken-yellow.

Ask: Why does the author describe the "world" outside Wilbur's pen as sweet smelling?

Reply: Pig pens smell like rotten food, manure or other animal wastes[2], mud, earth, and grain--but outside it smells like clover, sweet, clean grass.

Ask: Was Wilbur happy with his new friend?

Reply: Well he wanted a friend but he wasn't sure Charlotte was a good friend or at least the kind he wanted to have.

---

[2] My suggestion as a substitute for some words that bothered the class. They were willing to use them but not in writing!

Preparation for writing:

Draw a summary from the class. Lead pupils to recall their experiences meeting new friends.

How did you feel when you met someone new? How did you feel when you moved and transferred to a new school? Can you remember how you felt when you were placed in a classroom and you did not know anyone there?

What went through your mind when you met your best friend for the first time?

The children should be given an opportunity to reflect on their past experiences before they begin to write.

The group composition that followed this discussion was also by Sammy. He and one or two others seemed to take the lead in proposing subjects. The class itself, after discussion, settled on Sammy's ideas as the ones to work with. It may be worth noting that Gylda also proposed ideas but would not let anyone participate with her. Later she became quite a prolific writer on her own.

Children who did not propose ideas often participated quite vigorously in the writing of the composition. Some would suggest words only; others would contribute phrases and sentences.

Group Composition:

> The first time I met Larry, I was in the school yard playing "Grandpapa Stanky"--a game my brother and I made up. It was a hot summer night and my mother was watching from the front porch. She was watching us because it was about 11:00 at night. Larry sneaked up behind me and hit me with a broken broom stick. He found it in one of the garbage cans in the alley. My brother Melvin came running when he saw that I was hit. Then he said, "Larry why did you hit

my brother?" Larry said, "I was only playing." I told Melvin I didn't know the boy and he said it was only Larry--a boy in his room. I told Melvin, "You tell this fool to leave me alone."

Individual Compositions:

When we got down S. I thought that would not make friends with anyone until two girls came to play with me and I didn't know but they were very nice to me. Last year when I went down their I knew them. I went over my cousin house and play with her, she was 18 years old the year before.

--Lona Wilson

To the Proffer:[3]

The first day I came to Shepard School, I did not have any friends. When I came to my room the children did not want to make friends. But I did not have any play mates at all. The teacher did something to solbe it and the children became friends and wanted to make friends. The first boy was Samuel W. and Larry T. and it was the week before the summer vacation.

--Larry McDaniel

When I first came to Shepard School I was very sad because I did not have any friends. Then I met a boy named Jerry. I began to feel better. He was the first friend I met at school.

--Hosea Sims

When I was five year old I didn't have any friends at Shepard and then I met Latricia Patrick and some more friends. Then I met Mary in room 202.

--Cynthia Means

---

[3] This composition was written for the professor.

When I first met Linda I was in 204. On the first day of school we went out for recess and we were playing rope. The girls and I wanted to play partner. Everyone had partners escept Linda and I and I had to be her partner and when it was close to our turn I asked her what was her name and she said my first name is Linda and my last name is Pickett. I told her my first name is Sandra and my last name is Hall. And while we were getting in line she told me that she lived on Richmond St.. And I told her that Richmond was the street that I moved on during the summer. She told me her address was 1123 Richmond St. And I told her my address was 1137 Richmond St. and my phone number was 826-4346. And she didn't tell me her phone number, but that afternoon Linda and I went home together.

--Sandra Hall

When I first came to Shepard, I were shy because it were my first day. Then you told me to seat by Edward. He were all right, but I has to do something for him. I thought then my teacher were very nice. And the next day the girl who sat up front in my row told me that the teacher were mean.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

When my sister and me went to our back yard and played "pop-the-wipe". My sister's friend smuck behind the bushes and put her hands on my eyes and said "who am I?" But I did not know her or him, so I said "leave me alone or I will hit you very hard." My sister said don't hit her, she is my friend. Her name is wendy lou little and she is a new girl in our room and she is my friend.

--Iris Ocasio

When I first came to Shepard School I went out for recess and I just stood up in the corner. But one day when I was sitting, three boys asked me to come and play with them. One said we want two against two. They were playing ball. Me and my Buddy won so thats how I made friends.

--Earnest Hayes

When I first came to school, I was afraid of the children and I did not have a friend. When I got in school, I met Mable. We were in kindergarden together. She ask me my name, I told her my name and then when it was time to go home I said good-by.

--Carol Harris

One day my brother's friend Edward Bell came over. My brother was eating, so he told Edward to wait in his room. He made a mistake and went into mine. He found my toys and started to play with them. I said, "Wait a minute buster, what are you doing in my room." He said, "I am your brother's friend." I said you have a sneaky way. Then I told him to get out of my room and get lost. When my brother came back I said get this friend of yours out of my room and stay out. Edward came over to my house every day and now I've started to like him.

--Ronald Saulter

Immediately after the English period, an unfortunate incident took place. Cynthia had a temper tantrum because another child had made a face and hurt her feelings. The tantrum started out with cries that soon developed into screams and finally she fell upon the floor and rolled about kicking obstacles closest to her. I asked the pupils to remain in their seats while I attended Cynthia. I made no other comments and yet six pupils went home and wrote their reactions to the incident.

I think it was ashame the way Cynthia act today in front of the teacher. If she have better maners she would not act like that. We should not laugh when she have her fits. Cynthia needs help and I think that we can help her. I fill sorry for her. She can get better with a little help. I really do.

--Lona Wilson

When Cynthia felled down and screamed, well then when It was over with she screamed again. Then my heart beated so fast that it seemed as if I was going to stand up and say 'Be Quiet!" But if I would have said I think she would have gotten mad. She might jump up and collide with me, so I didn't say anything, because I had been hearing it for years.

--Gylda Moore

Cynthia

I think that she does that because sometimes kids bother her. And then she has her fit. Because in 205 she had a fit in there and I know that Cynthia can't control herself. So I think I should help her. But you told Andrew that he is too little to help. So I'll try to do the bes I can.

--Latricia Patrick

When people like Cynthia have fits, they holler, sceam, cry and fight. Yesterday when Cynthia had a fit, it made me feel like I was outside when a lot of children were make up noise. And the noise went into my ears and hurted my ears and my head.

--Sandra Hall

I am sorry that we acted up when Cynthia acted up. I hope you well said you will forgive us.

--Michael Holifield

What Cynthia did yesterday remind me of my seven year old brother. He cannot walk, talk, hear, and I do not no whether he can see. My brothe he has fits too. I don't know what happened to him when he was a baby. I haven't seen him since he was three or four years old, and I won't to be able to see him until I get sixteen years old, unless my father brings him home.

--Stanley Brooks

"Jancsi was up bright and early that morning..." to "...who had the measles--that was something."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Cousin Kate from Budapest," page 15 of The Good Master by Kate Seredy (New York: The Viking Press, 1935).

Lesson 6

Specific Aim: To enforce learning from previous lesson.

Procedure: Duplicate the selection for distribution. Have passage read aloud. Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: Jancsi, Budapest, Hungarian.

Preliminary discussion

Ask: Who is the hero of the selection?

Reply: Jancsi.

Ask: Where did he live?

Reply: (1) on a farm.

(2) on a farm because he was milking cows early in the morning.

(3) in Hungary, on the Hungarian plain.

Ask: Why was he so excited?

Reply: (1) Cousin Kate was coming to visit.

(2) His only cousin was going to visit for a time.

Ask: Why did he want to milk the cows so very early in the morning?

Reply: (1) To get his chores over with so he could have the whole day with his cousin.

(2) Maybe he couldn't sleep because of the excitement.

Ask: Where did Kate live?

Reply: (1) In the city.

(2) In a city called Budapest.

Ask: Do you think Jancsi thought he was extra special?

Reply: Maybe,--he was the only boy in the neighborhood who had a city cousin.

Ask: How did Jancsi's family know that Kate was planning to visit them?

Reply: His uncle wrote a letter.

Ask: What exactly did the letter say?

Reply: It said Kate had the measles last winter and that she was delicate--and that is why she was coming to the country.

Ask: What do you think a delicate girl might be like?

Reply: Skinny, thin, sickly, weakling, nervous.

Ask: Why was Jancsi so very much impressed by Kate's description?

Reply: (1) He probably never saw her and wanted to know what she would look like.

(2) He had never had measles and he thought it must be something good to have.

(3) He wasn't delicate, so he wanted to see his only cousin--his only delicate cousin.

Preparation for writing:

From the selection the class decided Jancsi was a happy boy who was so excited over his cousin's visit he couldn't sleep; because he couldn't sleep he went about doing his chores so that he could spend the rest of the day with his cousin. He thought she was extra special for several reasons. She had had the measles, she was a city girl, she probably had been to school and seen many things. The girl probably was so delicate that she had to vacation in the country. Jancsi, they said, probably didn't know how to read or write. This conclusion was drawn because Father told him what was in the letter and they reasoned that country schools were few and far between.

This material should be summarized. For example:

Now, here we have a boy perhaps your age--who is so excited about seeing his only cousin, that he can't stay in bed. He busied himself with chores so that time would pass by quickly. His cousin seems to be an interesting girl. She has had the measles and her father called her delicate. This delicate condition seemed to be the reason for her visit to the country. Have you ever experienced a similar situation? Have you ever been so excited that you couldn't sleep--so excited you had to busy yourself with chores, errands, activities to pass the time?

Probable replies: Christmas or various holidays, birthdays, special visits, trips, etc. The replies should be used to generate group or individual composition. In this case, the children were willing to write by themselves.

Individual Compositions:

One time when I was a little girl around four years old. My mother could stay home with me because she didn't work and I was to little to stay home by my self. But as I was getting older

I had to go to school and I could cry because my mother wasn't there. But when my sisters, brothers went to school for the first time they were glad. I just couldn't wait to go to school, but when I went to school I didn't want to go to school.

--Gylda Moore

I Came from Ohio

One day when me and grandmother was coming to Chicago, my brother was in the other side of the train. My grandmother told me and my brother to sit down. I asked my mother could I go to the wash-room. My mother said yes. I said Look! at all of the water under us. I asked the man beside me could I see his book. The man said yes. Did you go on a train?

--Michael Holifield

Last Christmas I was so happy that it was Christmas Eve, I asked my mother if I could stay up to see Santa Claus. But my mother made me get to bed. On Christmas morning I got a pair of boots, a pair of mittens and a doll just about the same size as I am. I was very happy with them but I was unhappy about something. I could not get my twelve year old sister a present and she me a beautiful cap with fur on the outside of it.

--Linda Booker

After school closed for summer vacation, my mother, brother and three sisters and I went in the airport. We were going on a trip to Puerto Rico on a jet plane. We waited for a while and then we got on the scealater [escalator] to go up on the plane, when we got on the plane, the hostess said, "fasten your seat-belts." were we ready to take off? she showed us how to fasten our seat belts and when we got there, the hostess told us to unfasten our seat belts. A lady asked the people on the plane if they had a good time and we did.

--Iris Ocasio

Once there was a cute little doll whom had never seen a train so one day her mother took her to the train station. She had to pick up her father, he had to go on a trip. When she saw the train. It looked like a toy to her. Her mother was looking at the paper. So she jumped where the train was coming. The train was getting sleepy and ran over one of her legs, and now she stands on one leg and one foot.

--Gylda Moore

One day my cousin came over and my mother said, "do you want to go outside" and I said yes. We went down the stairs and he said look at the giant. I said what gaint? That gaint and he pointed to a tree. I said that is a tree not a gaint.

--Ronald Saulter

A Trip to My Cousins House

In the summer time my mother told me to get ready to visit my cousin's house. First I took off my cloths and dashed into the bathtub. When I got through washing up, I dryed myself off and put on clean cloths. When I got finished I said is everybody ready. We got in the car and talked and talked until we got to the house. Soon we were playing with them. Then we got hungry and said lets have some pop. So we played again. And then we went home. They talked and talked again. When we got home we took a nap.

--Latricia Patrick

Last year I went window shoping Downtown. I went on Roosevelt Road to get my sister some boots. After I got home my father drove me Downtown and I got me a Kenner work shop. I was glad to have it, because it had wood and all the things I needed. I had fun playing with it.

--Stanley Brooks

"Jancsi heard a great rumbling, snorting..." to "...good luck to you, Mister Nagy!"

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Cousin Kate from Budapest," pp. 21-22 of The Good Master by Kate Seredy (New York: The Viking Press, 1935).

Lesson 7

Specific Aim: To illustrate a description of a scene with action.

Procedure: Duplicate the passage for distribution. Anticipate vocabulary difficulties: (line 6) vicious-looking

Say: We find Jancsi and Father a little later the same morning, at the railroad station.

Ask: What did Jancsi hear?

Reply: A great rumbling, snorting and pounding in the distance.

Ask: What did he feel?

Reply: He felt the platform shake. (This was soon associated with an "L" platform.)

Ask: Why did he look up at Father?

Reply: He wanted to see if Father was frightened.

Ask: What did he see?

Reply: (1) a train

(2) a black monster or a dragon

Ask: What does he really see?

Reply: A train.

Ask: How is the train described?

Reply: (1) It is a monster coming around the bend.

(2) A dragon coming around the bend.

(3) The monster had an eye that glittered in the sunshine.

(4) This monster had "black teeth that were close to the ground with black smoke pouring from its head."

(5) This monster gave a "shrill scream, blew white smoke out of its ears", and groaned as it came to a halt.

Ask: Why do you think Jancsi was frightened by the train? Why did it look and sound like a dragon or a monster?

Reply: He probably had not seen a locomotive train. When he saw the smoke and head light, felt the platform shake and heard the noises he was frightened.

Ask: From the description, was this a streamlined diesel engine or is it one of the old timers?

Reply: One of the old timers, because from his head and ears poured smoke and steam. It had long black teeth--a cow catcher.[1]

Ask: What happened when this monster came to a halt?

Reply: Men jumped down from the cars.

Ask: What did the men do then?

Reply: They opened the doors to the cars.

Ask: But Jancsi doesn't call them cars. He thought they were? (houses).

Ask: How does the author describe Jancsi's eyes?

Reply: His eyes were round and shiny like big black cherries. He was so excited that his eyes grew bigger and bigger.

Ask: He expected to see people dressed in their very best silks and velvets, but what did he see?

Reply: He saw them in everyday clothes--in grays and browns.

Ask: What word is used to describe people who wear silks and velvets?

Reply: Glorious

Ask: The people who were grays and browns were called? (everyday) people.

Ask: What about Jancsi now? Do you think he is a bit disappointed at this point?

Reply: Yes, not what he had expected.

Say: Someone shouted Father's name and when he answered, Jancsi saw a man hurrying toward them, dragging a little girl. An ordinary kind of girl with plain black hair, a dirty face and skinny legs. What do you think this description is trying to tell us?

---

[1] The student who supplied this answer had run into the term in his reader the previous year.

Reply: This is just a girl, nothing special, but she does have a dirty face.

Ask: What do you think is happening to Jancsi's picture of his first cousin?

Reply: He is sad, unhappy, and very disappointed.

Ask: How do we know the man that dragged his cousin was a little tired, unhappy, and nervous?

Reply: He wiped his forehead, called the girl an imp, and an unspeakable little devil. He was so glad to get rid of her that he pushed her to Father and said, "take her and welcome."

Say: Well now, what might be going through each character's mind--Father's, Jancsi and Kate's.

Reply: Father is shocked and disappointed. Jancsi may be thinking that he is not so very lucky in having a city cousin. Kate doesn't know them, but she probably thinks she can behave as she always has.

The children were given time to reflect on their own experiences. They were asked to think especially about their own relatives.

But at this point the class rejected the writing of another group composition. They said they were tired of sharing ideas. Several children asked if they could write at home. Only three did so, however.

Individual Compositions:

My Causin Ronnie

One day my causin Ronnie went outside to play in our back yard. He went up stairs and got some water. Then he went back down stairs and made a pile of dirt. And then poured the water into the dirt. Then they made mid cakes. and Ronnie put the mid all over himself.

And his face was all middyed. So I took him in the house and made him take a bath. Soon as he was dry. I took him out of the tub and dryed him some more. Then I put him on some clean cloths. Soon he had to go home.

--Latricia Patrick

My Cousin Shirley

One day Shirley came down stairs to play with me. We were playing Miss Soe. When we stopped She got mad and said, "I'm going to tell your mother that you are not playing right." Then Shirley went up stairs and told my mother that I was not playing right. So She came down stairs and sat on the sofa and stared at me.

--Latricia Patrick

I have a cousin that is ten years old. She is very kind to me. When she has money, she sometimes buys candy and give me some. This Christmas she is going to get a little doll and my little doll and my little sister is going to get a ball.

--Linda Pickett

I have a fourteen year old cousin who lives in Tennessee. We brought her to Chicago but she stayed with us for only one day. We went to the park. Later my grandfather came to my house and she went home with him. She would not come back to my house. My mother said that if she ever went to Tennessee again, she was not going to bring her back. Well my grandmother got tired of her and she wanted my cousin to go back to my house, but she went to my aunts. Then my aunt got sick of her and wanted her to go bact to my grandmother, but they did not tell my cousin the plan She went back to my grandmother all right but when she got ready. They all got sick of her because she was lazy and she always wanted to be around teenagers. There was one aged 14, 15, 13, 16, 18, 17. I think she wanted to be where the boys where.

--Harriet Collins

"Uncle Ulysses stood near the door..." to "...the jukebox automatically changed color too."

The complete model will be found in the selection, "Pie and Punch and You-Know-Whats," p. 86 of More Homer Price by Robert McCloskey (New York: The Viking Press, 1951).

Source for this use: Canterbury Tales (Viking Press)

Lesson 8

Specific Aim: To provide pupils with the necessary skills to create an air of mystery about a situation that has a logical explanation.

Procedure: Duplicate for distribution.

Ask: Why do you think I chose, to read this particular selection?

Reply: (1) Because it has so many colorful words in it.

(2) Because it's exciting.

(3) Because it is a mystery.

Ask: Shall we reread the selection and pick out the colorful, vivid, exciting words? (Put the selected words on the chalkboard for greater clarification.)

Ask: Have you ever been frightened by something or someone and has this same experience a logical explanation?

Reply: (1) "Yes, I thought my life-size doll was a person until my mother came in and put the light on."

(2) "Oh, you mean things like when my dog pulled off the bed covers and I thought it was a ghost."

Say: Do you think you would like to write about one of your actual experiences? (The children may work at home or at school.)

Individual Compositions:

One summer day I was playing hide and seek with my brother and some of my friends. One of my friends was Lewis. He did the counting while we hid. I dashed behind one fence. When he started to look for us I crept behind the house and taged goose. He caught my brother Elliott. When Elliot started counting the fun really began. He would look and look for us, but we all succeeded in getting to gooee before he found us.

--Stanley Brooks

Sometimes when I'm home by myself I hear lots of sounds. It would sound like somebody, was in the house. But if it was I had the light on so if I saw somebody I could run. But most of the time this goes on, I found out what it was. It was the floor squeaking upstairs, the water was left on and It was making noise.

--Gylda Moore

One day I didn't take out the garbage, so I took it out at night, then I saw something. It was a shadow of something, it looked like a giant rake with long lines. The long lines reached to another one. I saw more of them. I threw the bag of garbage in the garbage can and ran in the house. The next morning when I started to school, I saw it again. It was a telephone pole.

--Michael Covington

One night when I went to bed my mother asked me if she could put her coat in my room and I said yes. That night I could not sleep. I looked up and I saw something that looked like a tall man. What do you think it was? It was my mothers coat and my brothers hat on the door above the coat.

--Harriet Collins

On Monday night my mother went to my aunt's house and I turned all the lights off to see the T.V. Then something moved and I sought and ran quickly under my bed. Then I ran to turn on the lights to see what it was and it was my cat Tom eating a rat.

--Eldwin Santana

One Christmas me and my brother went over to my Grandfather's house. We had on a cowboy suit that we got for Xmas and as we were walking through the park a boy came from a tree and took Melvin's gun and then we ran to find my Grandfather. When we found my Grandfather we looked for 3 hours. And as we were going to give up I spotted the boy. Then I ran and snatched the gun from him. I remembered I saw that face before. But just as I was going to tell my Grandfather I had invited him to one of my parties, my Grandfather said go home and we ran all the way home. Just as I was going to steal something from my brother and I told him to leave my party. His name was Sammy Lee Davis and that is how I solved my problem.

--Samuel Lee Wilson

My Misterio

One night when I was asleep in my bed room. And I was dreaming of something real nice. Then all of a sudden I jumped up in the middle of the night. After a minute I looked all around my room. And I saw something standing in my door way and I was so afraid. I jumped up and turned on the light and looked at the strange thing standing in my door way. Then I looked again. What did I see, my very tall walking doll standing in my door way. Then after I got a good look at her I went and got her and put her in my bed with me.

--Sandra Keys

One Christmas morning when I got up I saw a big tank pointed right at my head with a big hole in it and a man sitting on it. I got scared and yelled. My brother said thats a play tank, you got that for Christmas. He put a cell in it and pushed a button, it came out with a loud noise and I ran. I shut the cell and I then got use to it.

--Earnest Hayes, Jr.

At nine o'clock my mother sent me to bed. And when I got in the bed I went to sleep. I snore in the bed. I saw a coat and hat on the floor when I went to the bathroom. In the middle of the night my dog jumped in my bed and I grabbed him.

--Edward West

One night I was in bed and my cat Puff was in the room next to me. I was asleep she jumped on me.

--Sarah Johnson

One time when I was in the bed with my sister and something fell off the bed. She told me too look what fell. So I looked I didn't see anything and I put my hand down, and I felt something It felt like fur I though it was as mouse. I didn't wait to see what it was. I jumped out of bed. And I wanted to sleep somewhere else. After I had asked to sleep some place else my sister started walking around. Then I got more scared, then she turned on the light and all it was is some fur that fell.

--Gylda Moore

Last year when my mother took me Christmas Shopping I brought my mother a bathrope and I brought my father a pair of houshoes.
My brother brought them a Bingo Game.
And they brought my brother a Cowboy set, and they brought me a hugh baby doll. And when we got them they were gift wrapped it said.

Don't Open Until Christmas

--Lona Wilson

My brother has something very pretty. It is small and round. Sometimes it is put in somentthing big. Somethines it is put in something small. We love to look at it. My mother doesn't allow us to play with it. Every time we walk by it turns off an on. It is a blue light.

--Carol Harris

One day I had a puppydog. I went to bed that night and it was on the cover. So the next day my mother tied him to the radtaior. That night there was something on my cover. I called my mother and said, "Something is on my cover." So my mother got up and turned on the light and it was my dog. He did not want to sleep on the floor.

--Latricia Patrick

One night when I was in bed, my mother told me to turn out the light. And I was frightened then something big jumped on my bed and I got under the blanket. And then my mother came in my bedroom and turned on the light. Then I saw that it was my dog Lassie. I was frightened because I thought that the Landlord's dog had got into our house and came into my bedroom when the light was out. His name was Prince, and he was a large dog.

--Sandra Hall

i

One time I was going Christmas shopping, and I brought socks, towels, dolls, trucks, cars, and lots of other toys and clothes. When we got out of the store we was in. We went in another store to by some wrapping paper when I got home I wrapped mine, so when I got finished my sisters wrapped there. Then I felt like unwrapping mine and doing it over again but I didn't. So now I wrap mine when they wrap theres.

--Gylda Moore[1]

ii

When my brother was home and I was a baby, he would try to scare me. He would put a sheet over himself. One time he put a sheet over himself when my sister came in the house. She was only around six years old then. She saw my brother under the sheet, and she screamed. Then she jumped right in the baby bed with me. And my brother laughed all night. After that he was laughing about it, almost every day.

--Gylda Moore

iii

When it was Christmas morning I was the first one up. It was around in "62." My mother and some of my other sisters went some where, me and Kevin heard them leave. So we got out of bed and opened some presents. When we heard mother coming. We pushed the toys under the bed and shot right back in bed my brother saw us, and made us explain what had happened. And after all of the explaining Kevin was doing, dash right in my sisters bed and after that we didn't do it again.

---

[1] This and the next two themes were written at home. Gylda writes until she has exhausted her feelings about the subject. It is an interesting fact that Gylda is the only child at home--the other children are married, away at school, and in service. The father is dead.

--Gylda Moore

Last summer me and my brother slept on the back porch and I saw a gaint. I hopped out of bed and I was beating on the door and then I saw it was just a tree. And I went back to bed.

--Ronald Saulter

I was in my room. I heard something walking through my house. I didn't know what it was and it jumped up in my bed. I saw his eyes, they were as blue as the sky and nose as pink as it could be. It was white as snow and when morning came I awake. It was my cat. She walked from room to room and bite off my covers.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

Last Christmas when I went to Sears I could smell the scent of Christmas trees, candy and many other things. As my grandmother and I were traveling down the street, I saw a lady fall off a bus. It was bad, but after she began to laugh, I had to laugh. After all the shopping I was very happy because I had toys and other things all over the place.

--Harriet Collins

Once when I was sleeping with my mother and my brother was sleeping with my cousin all of a sudden we heard a loud screaming sound, it was my brother. I said what is the matter? He said "I saw something". Something like what? He said, "I saw a goast". A goast, I said, why that's impossible. All at once I heard something too. It sounded creepy and then all of us jumped in the bed at the same time. We stayed still for a moment, then I peeked out. It was my father coming home from work. He laughed and laughed at us. Then I said, why did you do that? He said I don't know, I thought you all were asleep.

--Lona Wilson

When I was a little girl around 4 or 5, we had a cat, and my brother Kevin didn't like the cat. One day my brother was mad I guess because he went in the kitchen and the cat was crying and angry. Kevin had turned on the fire and put the cat's tail on it. I felt like I was going to push Kevin on the fire and he could get burned. We had to do something with the cat because he was going to get my brother. And when we get another cat or dog, I won't let my brother look at him hard or touch him.

--Gylda Moore[2]

One day in the summer, my cousin came to stay with us for two months. One night I was in the bed and I was asleep, but in the middle of the night I awaked and a ghost was standing at my bedroom door. I was so afraid of it I took the spread from my sister because I thought that it was going to kill me. But it was my cousin, he had got up to awake me. He was three years old and he wanted me to get him some water.

--Linda Booker

---

[2] Begun at school, finished at home.

One night me and my brother went to bed at 12 o'clock. I told my brother to look on the sofa. We ran into the closet door. My mother told us to go to bed. I said to my mother, something is on the sofa. My mother turned on the lights. My clothes were on the sofa.

--Michael Holifield

When I first came to my new house I did not like it because it looked spooky. Everynight I saw things. One looked like a cat and a dog. All of a sudden I screamed and my mother came running and asked what happened and turned on the light. What is the matter with you? I saw something up there and what do you think I saw? It was a paper bag.

--Hosea Sims

When I was in my room, I was very afraid of the night and I was very afraid to go to sleep. I am afraid of the night and my brother is afraid too. We were so afraid onenight that we saw our dog run around the house and we did not know what it was at first. My mother turned on the light and we saw what it was. And my mother said you are so afraid of the dark Larry McDaniel.

--Larry McDaniel

One day I went to my cousin's house to spend the night. We had a lot of fun together, so we went to bed. My cousin had some clay so he made some scary fingernails for his fingers, and some scary teeth for his teeth and a black scarf, a black sheet, and some black boots and he looked like a black boy. In the middle of the night he scared me.

--Larry Travis

A letter by Cynthia Means

Cynthia Means had had a violent temper tantrum just minutes before dismissal. She fought classmates and teachers until finally, she was dismissed for the day. Upon reaching home, she heard the afternoon news broadcast--Alderman Tomaso had passed away. Cynthia said, "I just wanted to write Mrs. Lucille Tomaso and tell her I know how she feels and that I loved her husband. So before anyone came home from work I decided to write her a letter." Cynthia spelled Lucille Tomaso as she thought it was pronounced.

Cynthia Means Grade 4B
Room 308

Dear Mrs. Lullie Morthoug

I am sorry what happen to your hudand I love him very much. Please don't cry Mrs Lullie Morthoug You will make me cry to. I am sorry to here this. He was helping this city. I hope you will ever forget him please don't becase I love him very very much. I ard it on the news I hope you have a very good Chistmas. Merry Chistmas. to you. Mrs. Lullie Morthoug

From Cynthia Means

Room 308 Grade 4B Good-by

Four papers by Andrew McDaniel

Andrew McDaniel is twelve years old. He has been described as the worst discipline problem in the school. In September he was in fifth grade. After being rejected by two fifth grade teachers and refused by the third, he was demoted to fourth grade. When he entered my room he said, "I like two teachers in this school and you may be the third--I'm waiting for you to trip yourself up." One day he said, "Mrs. Nesper, what would you like me to do for you? I don't know what I want to do, you tell me." After he was exposed to lesson eight, he began to write about himself.

i

When I was young about 5 years ago I was two Stay with my Sister but I was hard headed little boy then My Mother told me two be very careful crossing alleys it was in the winter time it was all most 9:30 at 9:30 my Mother told me two be in the House but I was hard headed like I told you at firist I would Run across the street without looking both ways but one night I learred my lesson I had Saw my Sister over cross the alley I had asked My Sister two let me play with her and She Said nall and I Said OK and walk away and just as I cross the alley it happened I was hit and drug from the alley to 2814 Mozart and my hold back was Sewed up and then I learned my lesson

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray The Lord Soul to keep
if I should Die before I wake
I pray The Lord my soul to keep

ii

When I was nine years old I was working for a white man then on a milk Truck the name of the company is Bowman Dairy Company

This was in the Summer Time then one day I seened him coming and I Raned out of my House when were To make the last stop there was a dog and I was afraid and I the last stop There was a dog wait on the Steps I dropped the milk and jumped down the stoairs and the milk berke and the milkman came running and He Said He only bits one leg at time and when He said that He bit me on the arm and I started to cry and they said we are sorry didt do it

iii

When I was in 307 I was all ways bad one day me and my Teacher went in the Hall two have a little talk and She grabbed my ear and I got mad and hit her with my Sweather and She Sent me to the office and Said She will not take me back in 307 neaver again and one day I said to miss Becvar Can I go see my teacher and She Said yes and I said thank you and I said miss Simmion will you take me back and She Said No Andrew you dint even tell me that you were sorry and I said I am not sorry and I hope you die Right this moment and She said get away From way Right Now and my mouth went off and I call her some dirty names and Miss Becvar came and got me and sent me to 306 and He put me out to and sent me to 308 and I am in 308 right Now. and when I was in 306 one day me and my teacher went in the Hall way and He told me to be a good boy He will Send me to Office and the office Said there is not another room for you in 5th grade and the office said now you will start with 4th grade again and said I am not going to a 4th grade room and I started cry so they called my mother to school but She was ill so one of my Mother's Friend came for her Son to Andrew Hawthore Hes in 304 and the office sent Him back to 304 and Sent me back to 4th grade and I had to come

iv

When I was working on A Milk Truck I was working For a White man Then one Saturday I was to Make a Stop and get some money. The milk Man had made The bill wrong and The man grabbed a milk Jug and busted The Jug on Me and The glass hit me Right between the eyes and I had 6 stitchs and I gave my Job up and worked For other milk man.

--Andrew McDaniel

UNIT I

Part 2
Learning to Describe Sense Impressions

Developed by

THE CURRICULUM CENTER IN ENGLISH
Northwestern University
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Evanston, Illinois 60201

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UNIT I

Part 2
Learning to Describe Sense Impressions

As educators we are obliged to educate all of the children of all of the people. We are expected to plan our educational programs in such a way that each individual's particular needs are met. But, we very seldom go to the children for the information we use in planning our programs. Instead we consult test records, past performances; we even rely more on information obtained from parent-teacher conferences than on the child. It is extremely important that we recognize that each child, no matter what his learning rate--slow, average, accelerated--has thoughts and reactions of his own. Once teachers accept this realization, they will be able to capitalize on the wealth of material children can provide. A teacher can then guide and encourage each child to express his ideas in written form. These individual creative efforts will be invaluable in planning and revising educational programs.

In my opinion, the compositions developed through these lessons provided me with important information to better meet my pupil's individual needs, wants and desires.

Lesson 9

Purpose: To write impressions of a person we have met for the first time.

Preliminaries: The selection was duplicated for class distribution. After I distributed the models, I directed the pupils to read the selection orally and silently.

Exercise A

Procedure:

Difficult Words	**Children's Definitions**
ruts	tracks
cross as an old patch	non-literal expression
vaccinations	shots
specimens	sample
concern	worried
glittery	shining
declare	said

The above definitions were given by the children with the help of dictionaries. "Cross as an old patch" doesn't mean she looked like a patch, that's a non-literal expression, said Harriet Collins.

NOTE: Non-literal and literal expressions were introduced to the pupils earlier in the year when we discussed general to specific and specific to general terms, for example:

Boy

the boy in the blue shirt

the boy in the blue shirt and black pants the boy in the blue shirt and black pants and brown shoes

the boy in the blue shirt, black pants, brown shoes, and yellow socks

the boy in the blue shirt, black pants, brown shoes, yellow socks with a red handkerchief

Two pupils asked, "Well, what about the boy in the blue shirt that looks like a pig?" "Say, what about the sloppy girl that smells like a pig or the kids in some rooms that smell like zoos?" This might have turned into a name-calling lesson if I had not changed the emphasis.

Q. ALL RIGHT, YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER THESE TERMS--LITERAL AND NON-LITERAL EXPRESSIONS. (I placed these on the chalkboard. We looked literal up in the dictionary and found that it meant "accurate and unimaginative." I placed the definition on the board.)

Q. IF THAT WORD MEANS ACCURATE AND UNIMAGINATIVE, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO US?

R. 1) Accurate is true, no lies

2) Unimaginative . . . well, imagination means you can make things up, so . . . "un" in front changes it.

Q. WHAT DOES "UN" IN "UNCOMMON" DO FOR THE ROOT WORD?

R. Common is something you can see every day and uncommon means the opposite, you don't see it every day.

Q. ALL RIGHT, WHAT DOES "UN" DO FOR IMAGINATIVE?

R. You don't have any imagination. Unimaginative means with no imagination . . . so if you say something that's it, it's what you said.

Q. IF A CHILD IS SAID TO LOOK LIKE A PIG OR ANY OTHER ANIMAL, DO WE REALLY MEAN TO SAY HE LOOKS LIKE A PIG OR COW, ETC.?

R. No, not really.

Q. WHAT COULD WE CALL THESE EXPRESSIONS?

R. 1) Non-literal, because it isn't accurate--it isn't true. But the smell's real, Mrs. Nesper, so that's literal.

2) Another child broke in: You know Jeffrey, well we call him Froggy. Froggy looks like a frog all right, but that's a non-literal expression because he really isn't a frog.

(Many of the children watched for literal and non-literal expressions in the models presented in the lessons.)

"The next morning a visitor came up..." to "...smoke and steam. Heard they were syrup places.'"

The complete model will found on pp. 164, 165, 167 of Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1956 [now Harcourt, Brace & World]).

Selection

Introductory remarks: A family that lived in the city decided to move into their Grandmother's deserted house in the country. There they met many fine people. When one of their neighbors became ill during "sugaring time" (when the maple trees are ready to be sapped), they volunteered to work in his sugar camp. The children were so busy working that they forgot to go to school. Who do you think came to investigate this matter? (The truant officer.) Yes, the truant officer paid them a little visit and this is where we join them.

Discussion

Q. WHICH PERSON IN THIS STORY WERE YOU INTERESTED IN?

R. Annie-Get-Your-Gun.

Q. HOW WERE WE FIRST TOLD ABOUT ANNIE'S VISIT ON THE HILL?

R. A visitor came up onto the hill.

Q. LET'S LOOK AT THE STORY AGAIN. SHE IS CALLED A VISITOR. WHAT ARE WE TOLD ABOUT THE VISITOR?

R. 1) "She looked familiar"
2) "a solid sort of woman"
3) "a very settled-looking hat"
4) "her neck all wrapped in a big woolly scarf"
5) "picked her way carefully along the deep muddy ruts"
6) "looked as cross as an old patch"

Q. LET'S UNDERLINE THESE LINES SO THAT WE CAN GO BACK AND QUICKLY REVIEW THEM LATER.

7) "Miss Annie's voice sounded like a teacher's on a day when everybody didn't behave"
8) "This is Miss Annie Nelson . . . the county truant officer"
9) "looking them up and looking them down with her sharp eyes"
10) "Her eyes were glittery sharp but her mouth looked as if it might laugh . . . if she'd only let it."
11) "they call me Annie-Get-Your-Gun!"
12) "I'm freezing stiff"
13) "she began to unwind her scarf"
14) "I've never actually been inside one of these places"

Q. DO YOU LIKE ANNIE NELSON?

R. 1) No, I don't like truant officers.

2) I think she is funny looking.

3) I think she must be all right because she doesn't seem to be too mean.

4) Why did she tell them her nickname 'Annie-Get-Your-Gun?' If someone told me that, I'd laugh.

5) Well, maybe she isn't supposed to be mean, because it says her mouth looked like it might laugh.

6) Maybe she wanted them to squirm a little before she took them back to school.

7) I think Miss Annie is a good truant officer, but she also understands kids better than they think she does. After all, she can't help the way she looks.

NOTE: The children discussed the various qualities of Miss Annie Nelson and finally decided, "She's o.k. in our book."

Exercise B

Procedure: We quickly reviewed the phrases that were underlined in Exercise A, and I asked: DOES ANYONE SEE ANYTHING INTERESTING ABOUT THE WORDS THAT ARE UNDERLINED?

R. 1) Yes, it seems to me that this has something to do with general terms and specific terms. We started out with 'visitor' and ended up with 'Annie-Get-Your-Gun' trying to find out how maple syrup is made.

2) And I think there is something else here, some of the words we underlined told us about how she looked, and some told how she walked and how her eyes looked sharp at everybody, and how nosey she was.

Q. LET US PUT THESE TERMS ON THE BOARD AND MAYBE WE WILL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING INTERESTING. HOW WERE WE INTRODUCED TO MISS ANNIE NELSON?

R. Visitor.

Q. IS THIS A GENERAL OR SPECIFIC TERM?

R. General.

Q. ALL RIGHT. IF THIS IS A GENERAL TERM, LET US SEE IF THE AUTHOR GETS MORE SPECIFIC AS HE CONTINUES TO TALK ABOUT ANNIE.

(After a few moments of silent investigation, the children came up with the following:)

Visitor

Woman

Miss Annie Nelson

County Truant Officer

Annie-Get-Your-Gun

R. 1) Say, Mrs. Nesper, we did it--the author was general in the beginning and got very specific at the end.

2) But Mrs. Nesper, what about all his colorful words? He gave us lots of information.

Q. ALL RIGHT. LET US TAKE A LOOK AT THE "WORDS" YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT. (At the chalkboard we wrote the following: woman, hat, scarf, how she looked, voice, eyes, mouth, how she moved and how she felt. Across from these words, we wrote how the author had described these things. The children were very pleased that they "discovered" these particular aspects of the selection.)

Objects	Descriptions
woman	a solid sort
hat	a very settled-looking
scarf	woolly . . . unwind
neck	all wrapped
how she looked	as cross as an old patch
voice	sounded like a teacher's on a day when everybody didn't behave
eyes	sharp . . . glittery sharp
mouth	looked as if it might laugh . . . if she'd let it.
how she moved	carefully
how she felt	freezing stiff

Exercise C

The Writing Experience

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE EVER HAD A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE WITH A TRUANT OFFICER?

R. (Many hands were raised.)

Q. I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK THAT YOU MUST WRITE ABOUT A TRUANT OFFICER. PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DESCRIBE YOUR REACTIONS WHEN YOU AND I FIRST MET? I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TRY AND REMEMBER HOW THE AUTHOR DEVELOPED ANNIE NELSON IN THIS STORY. IT MAY HELP YOU WITH YOUR COMPOSITION.

R. Sammy said, Mrs. Nesper, do you mean we can write about the time when we first met you, like the last day of school, last year?

Q. WHY YES SAMMY, THAT WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT IDEA.

R. 1) You may not think so when we are finished writing, he continued, but don't forget what you said. You said it would be okay.

2) Cynthia Means screamed across the room, Ooooh yeah Mrs. Nesper, you remember that day, it was terrible.

3) Michael Holifield said, Okay, you asked for it, now it's my turn to get back at you.

I found it strange that Larry McDaniel was the only pupil who thought "it isn't right to write about teachers." (Note: Larry had a very special reason for defending the teacher. It seemed that he had been guilty of poor judgment on that last morning of the school year, and he feared the truth would be revealed in the children's compositions. See Michael Holifield's composition, page ~~100~~ 102. As can be surmised, the children were eager to "tell all about Old Mrs. Nesper."

After the discussion the children wrote their compositions. The children's papers have been alphabetized by lesson for ease in reference and evaluation of a pupil's development. (See pp. 98-139; the papers for this lesson are pp. 98-105.)

Lesson 10

Purpose: To demonstrate the value of details in writing.

Preliminaries: I duplicated a deleted version--from which all important modifiers had been removed--and the complete selection of a passage from Tree Wagon by Evelyn S. Lampman. Exercise A requires the deleted version and Exercise B the complete selection.

Exercise A

Procedure: I asked the children to read the selection silently and orally. Difficult words in the short version: Seenie, Asenath, self-pity.

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are going to meet a little girl named Asenath, who has a big problem. I don't want to tell you any more about her because I would like you to discover her problem.

"'Seenie!' Mary called. 'See-nie! A-see-nath! Sup-per!' . . ." to "that Seenie might see the shapes beside her."

The complete model will be found on pp. 7-9 of Tree Wagon by E. S. Lampman (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1953).

Discussion

Q. DID YOU LIKE THIS STORY?

R. Oh yes, but I think something's wrong.

Q. WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?

R. Well the story is so short, something's got to be wrong.

Q. CAN'T THE STORY BE SHORT AND STILL BE COMPLETE? (I used complete as a hint.)

R. Well, I don't know, but it's just too short or something.

Q. WHO WOULD LIKE TO READ IT FOR US? MAYBE IF WE READ IT ALOUD AGAIN, WE WILL FIND OUT WHAT'S THE MATTER. RAISE YOUR HANDS AT ANYTIME DURING THE READING IF YOU COME ACROSS SOMETHING THAT ISN'T CLEAR.

The story was read slowly. Several of the children raised their hands when they came to, "She might just stay where she was." They said, Well, that's one thing that doesn't make sense--where was she anyway?

The reader went on and at "Tomorrow she would be overlooked" was stopped. Well, the children said, That's another thing. What's going to happen tomorrow? Why would she be overlooked?

Stanley whispered, It sounds like one of your compositions, Ronald.

The questions mounted: Who would be well on their way?

Where were they going?

Why would they forget her?

What does this mean--"She tried to picture when they discovered her absence. It was a beautiful picture."

How could a family forget their kid?

Maybe she's stupid or something?

Why would she smile "in self-pity"?

Do you smile when you feel sorry for yourself?

And what's this Blackie the cat got to do with her?

NOTE: I asked them to write down their questions at the bottom of the dittoed sheets because too many of them wanted to contribute tc the discussion at the same time. The following questions are those asked by the students. The questions were read orally and a tally was made at the chalkboard of the number of children who asked each question out of the twenty-eight who reported.

	Questions	Tallies
1.	Why did Asenath want to stay where she was?	1
2.	Why did she want to run away?	1
3.	Where was Asenath?	16
4.	Where was Mary?	4
5.	Why wouldn't she answer?	5
6.	Who will overlook Seenie?	10
7.	Who is Seenie (or Asenath)?	13
8.	Who are "they"?	24
9.	Where are "they" going?	7
10.	What did she try to picture when they discovered her absence?	21
11.	Why would she smile in self-pity?	5
12.	Who is Blackie?	14
13.	Who are Seenie's mother and father?	1
14.	Who are "theys" mother and father?	1

Q. IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE FACTS?

R. Yes, because we have to think or figure out what happened in the story and we may be wrong.

Exercise B

Procedure: Additional difficult words were discussed. Dictionaries were employed, but the children like to express these meanings in their own terms.

Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
limestone	a kind of stone made from bits of shells, bones, pieces of animals. Example: chalk
crouching	to stoop
hubbub	noise, excitement
departure	to leave, to separate from something
impatient	cannot wait
anguish	suffer
elegant	fashionable
confessing	to tell
exclaiming	saying, said
dusk	dim, little light
satisfied	happy
writhing	no shape
admiration	to love or like
dismay	disappointment

"'Seenie!' Mary stood on the back steps of..." to "...beside her, and Seenie bent in admiration."

The complete model will be found on pp. 7, 8, 9 of Tree Wagon by E. S. Lampman (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1953).

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are going to meet Asenath again. Let us see if some of our questions will be answered.

Discussion

The selection was read orally several times.

Q. DO YOU LIKE THIS VERSION OF THE STORY?

R. Oh yes, now we know what's going on.

Q. ARE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED?

R. We know a lot more now than we did before.

NOTE: We went through and answered all the questions that the pupils asked in Exercise A. Many of the children wanted to make an outline of what they knew about this selection.

The outline was a group effort and it was placed on the chalkboard.

We know:

1. Where Mary was
2. Where they lived
3. Asenath was crouching in the chicken house
4. She heard her sister perfectly well (this they said was important since you can hear someone, but not know what they are saying).
5. Asenath never wanted to be seen or heard of again
6. Tomorrow they were planning to move to Oregon in wagons pulled by oxen.
7. Mary was growing impatient with Asenath
8. Asenath pictured her family in dismay when they found she was left behind. Asenath's picture:

> Mother's blue eyes would fill with tears, wring her hands in anguish (the pupils recalled Asenath got this idea from a book she had read)

9. In the meantime Mary gave up and went into the house
10. Asenath went on with her daydreaming:

> Mother would blame herself.

She tried to picture father's voice but this was hard to do--"Father seldom made mistakes."

Her sisters and brothers would be sorry they weren't nicer to her when they had a chance.

Asenath was happy with her daydream.

She felt so sorry for herself, but so happy with her dream that she smiled.

11. She was angry with the whole family because of Blackie.

The class liked the following descriptions:

1. "her voice floated across the barnyard"
2. "crouching in the darkening chicken house"
3. "Mary's voice, growing more impatient with each word, continued to call"
4. "Mother's blue eyes would fill with tears, and perhaps she might even wring her hands in anguish . . ."
5. " . . . she tried to imagine Father's voice answering. This was hard to do, because Father was generally right about things. He was so seldom wrong it was difficult to imagine him confessing to a mistake."

Q. WHY DID YOU LIKE THESE DESCRIPTIONS?

R. Well, I think they are colorful--they have lots of nice words in them.

Q. WHAT DO THESE NICE WORDS DO FOR THE STORY?

R. They describe what's going on in the story.

Q. WHAT DO THESE NICE WORDS DO FOR YOU?

R. They make everything so clear, you don't have to guess what's going on.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY GUESS?

R. 1) Well, you know that Asenath wasn't standing in the doorway of the chicken house because it says "crouching"

2) We know the chicken house didn't have any lights because it says "darkening chicken house"

3) How about Mary's voice, teacher? She was getting mad, because it says, "Mary's voice, growing more impatient with each word, continued to call."

4) And her mother would be upset if she were lost, and it says "eyes would fill with tears, and perhaps she might even wring her hands in anguish."

Q. WHAT DO THESE LOVELY DESCRIPTIONS, THAT YOU HAVE POINTED OUT, DO FOR YOU, THE READER?

R. 1) These descriptions tell us exactly what's going on in the story.

2) They make you see what the guy who wrote it wanted you to see.

Exercise C

The Writing Experience

Q. HAVE ANY OF YOU EVER GONE THROUGH WHAT ASENATH DID IN THE STORY?

R. 1) Yes, I tried to run away from home once.

2) I wanted to get on patrol and my mother said no and I said you'll be sorry when I'm dead.

3) I had trouble with a teacher once and she wanted to go home with me.

4) Once my brother was beating me up and my mother wasn't home and I just got mad at everybody in my family.

NOTE: After the discussion the pupils wrote their compositions. (See pp. 106-115.)

"Rufus sat in the third seat in the third..." to "...why Mama had come into the schoolroom."

The complete model will be found on pp. 183, 184, 185 of Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1943 [now Harcourt, Brace & World]).

Lesson 11

Purpose: To demonstrate the importance of classifying details for accurate reporting.

Preliminaries: The two versions of the passage from Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes were duplicated for class distribution. The short version has all the important details removed.

Exercise A

Selection

Introductory remarks: Rufus is a fine young man in the third grade. We will meet him at school where something very important happens to him. (No further comments were made because I didn't want to give away any information that would ruin the lesson using the short version. Direct the children to read the selection silently and then orally.)

Discussion

Q. HOW DID YOU LIKE RUFUS?

R. I'd like him fine if I knew what was going on. What's the matter with this author, can't she write? How am I supposed to know what is going on if I have to guess all the time?

Q. EXCELLENT. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU READ SOMETHING SIMILAR TO THIS STORY? (Smiles and chuckles broke out across the room. Notice how much awareness of their writing problems is shown by the children's replies.)

R. 1) Oh, Mrs. Nesper, you know when, we write like that.

2) So now you know how you all tell stories, you leave out so much no one can tell what's going on.

3) Ok, Ok, I get the picture, you'd like us to try and tell all the things that happened--all the important information.

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STORY OF RUFUS M.?

R. I've got plenty.

NOTE: The children took the remaining time to jot down all the questions they would like to have answered. The questions were read; a tally was made at the chalkboard of the number out of the thirty-one pupils reporting who asked each question. Questions and tallies are given below.

Questions	Tallies
1. Why did they leave out all the information?	2
2. What grade was Rufus in?	10
3. What time did mother come?	1
4. What did Mama say to the teacher?	11
5. Why did mother look like someone he didn't know?	2
6. When was school dismissed?	6
7. Was Mama upset?	1

8.	How did Mama look? plump?	10
9.	What kind of school did Rufus go to?	14
10.	What room was Rufus in?	15
11.	What kind of arithmetic was he doing?	16
12.	Why did Rufus's mother come to school?	13
13.	What seat did Rufus sit in?	14
14.	What is his mother's name?	16
15.	Who are the children in the class?	15
16.	Who was the teacher?	13
17.	Why did Mother look at Rufus?	2
18.	Where do they live?	1
19.	Why did he say, "away from home mother looked familiar?"	3
20.	What happened to Rufus?	1
21.	Was Mother driving or walking?	2
22.	Why did he almost upset the inkwell?	8
23.	Did the teacher send for Mama?	1
24.	Why did Hughie call Rufus Rufe?	3
25.	Why did Mother hurry out?	9
26.	Was Rufus upset?	3
27.	Who was Hughie?	7
28.	Who came in the room?	4
29.	What did he look like?	1
30.	What row did he sit in?	9
31.	Why did he sit in that row?	1
32.	Did he shout "Mama" when he saw her?	1
33.	Was he bad or good?	1

Exercise B

Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
common denominator	(math that has not been taught to them; they guessed that denominators must be taught in 5th or 6th grade--idea rooted from older kids in family)
inkwell	hole in our desk
expecting	waiting
apparition	ghost (this was looked up in the dictionary)
glanced	looked
aisle	like between our row and this next row is called an aisle place to walk
familiar	to know, not new
dismissed	sent home, sent out (arrived at because they heard 3:15 dismissal bell, etc.)
"Gitche Gumee"	name or title

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are again going to meet Rufus. We had lots of questions. Let's see if we learn the answers.

"Rufus sat in the third seat in the third row . . ." to "Rufus was still asking himself why Mama had come into the schoolroom."

The complete model is taken from the book Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1943), pp. 183-185.

Discussion

After the selection had been read, we discussed and answered as many of the questions as we could. Questions 3, 6, 8, 14, 16, and 21 were not answered. The children concluded that the author may have felt enough had been said on the subject and further discussion would have been unnecessary. Questions 4, 12, 18, 20, 23, 29, and 33 sparked enough enthusiasm for three pupils to read Rufus M. and a dozen names on a waiting list to read Rufus M.

Exercise C

Procedure: The full version was re-read orally. The students discussed the phrases that gave detailed descriptions of Mama and Rufus. For greater understanding and clarification they listed these phrases at the chalkboard.

Rufus

1. sat in the third seat in the third row in Room Three
2. head was bent low over his arithmetic paper
3. trying to find the least common denominator
4. heard someone come into the classroom
5. looked up thinking more about how he could make six go into four than about who was at the door
6. jumped up and almost upset his inkwell
7. really shocked
8. "Am I crazy?"
9. closed his eyes and then opened them half expecting the apparition of Mama . . . to disappear.
10. bent his head very low over his arithmetic paper again
11. kept his eyes right on his arithmetic paper
12. all right. What of it? That's the way he was trying to act.
13. if he had been thinking . . . he'd have thought she was at home in the kitchen
14. quite taken aback
15. still asking himself why Mama had come to the schoolroom

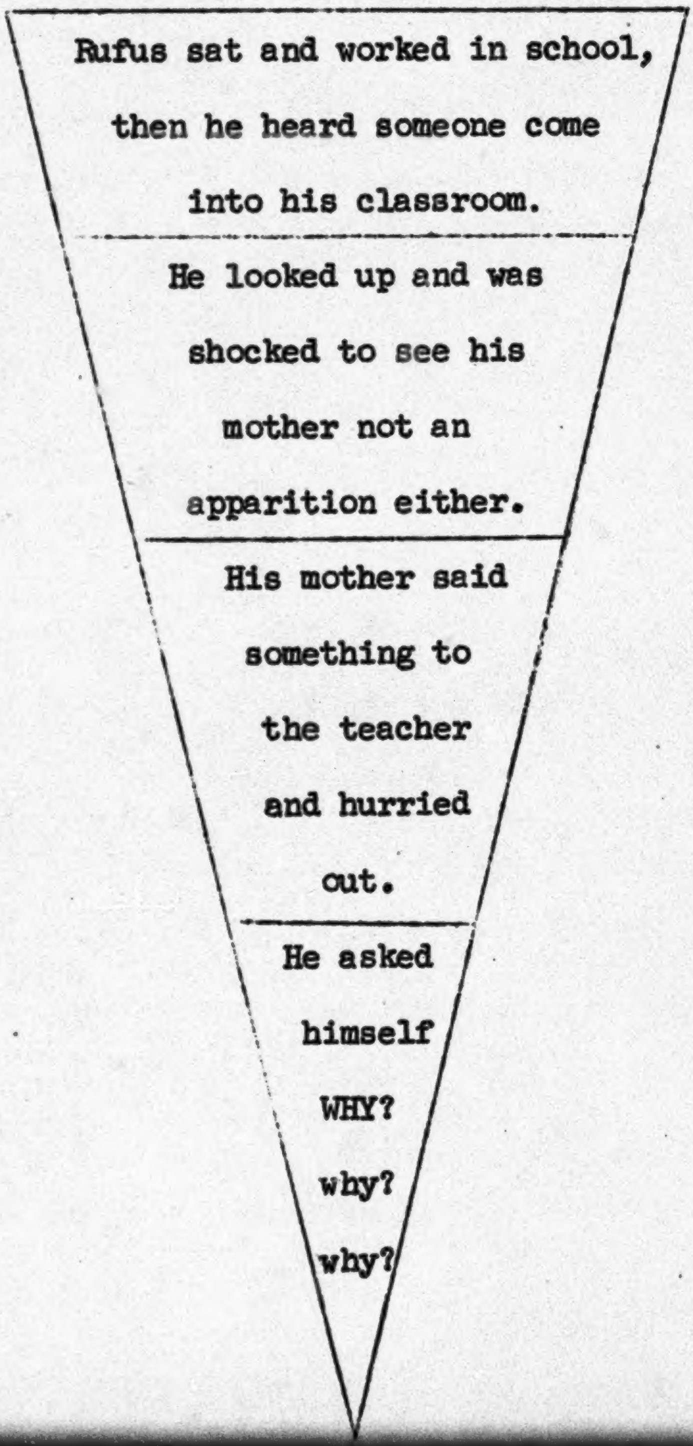
Mama

1. walking across the front of the room from the door to the teacher's desk

2. short hurried steps
3. said something in a low voice to the teacher
4. turned her head, took in the room with a quick glance, found Rufus, smiled and hurried out
5. walking across the Green
6. looked so familiar and yet like someone you didn't know too

The pupils made note that the "morning wore on" and the "fractions gave way to spelling" instead of "morning was over" . . . "fractions were over" or "we finished our fractions."

The children decided the selection moved from the general to the specific. To prove it they wrote the following summary at the board:



Rufus sat and worked in school, then he heard someone come into his classroom.

He looked up and was shocked to see his mother not an apparition either.

His mother said something to the teacher and hurried out.

He asked himself WHY? why? why?

Exercise D

The Writing Experience

Q. HAVE ANY OF YOU GONE THROUGH A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE? HAS YOUR MOTHER, FATHER, GRANDMOTHER, OR WHOEVER YOU LIVE WITH COME UP TO SCHOOL WITHOUT TELLING YOU? PERHAPS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS--YOU HAVE DONE SOMETHING AND YOU THINK YOU WILL BE PUNISHED, BUT THERE IS NO ONE AROUND TO PUNISH YOU. YOU CERTAINLY HOPE NO ONE WILL FIND IT NECESSARY TO PUNISH YOU, BUT YOU WAIT AND TIME PASSES SLOWLY. FINALLY SOMEONE COMES HOME AND YOU ARE RELIEVED THAT NOW THE WHOLE INCIDENT IS OVER--FINISHED.

NOTE: Rufus and the children in this classroom had something in common. They all knew what it was to wait in anticipation of the immediate future.

After this brief discussion the children wrote compositions. (See pp. 116-125.)

Lesson 12

Purpose: To review and demonstrate the importance of classification.

Preliminaries: I had ready for distribution two versions of the selection from A Wrinkle In Time by Madeline L'Engle. The short version has all of the important details removed.

Exercise A

Procedure: I directed the children to read the selection orally and silently. Difficult words: delinquent, tackled.

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are going to meet a teenager named Margaret Murry, Meg for short, who comes from a very interesting family. She has several problems and she seems to have trouble in solving her problems.

"In her bedroom Margaret Murry sat on her bed . . ." to "Gets back from where? And When?"

The complete model will be found in the book A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle (New York: Ariel Books: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc., 1962), pp. 3-5.

Discussion

NOTE: After having read this short version, the children asked the following questions. 28 pupils reported.

	Questions	Tallies
1.	What did she see when she looked out of the window?	10
2.	Where was her bedroom?	8
3.	Why did the house shake?	15
4.	Why did Meg shake?	5
5.	What was she afraid of?	3
6.	Why was she dropped down to the lowest grade?	10
7.	Why was the school wrong?	15
8.	What grade was she in?	9
9.	Were her brothers younger or older than she?	4
10.	Why did a boy say something nasty about her brother?	8
11.	Why did she act like a baby?	5
12.	Why would "they" call her names?	12
13.	Where did she throw her books down?	15
14.	Who were her brothers going to fight and why?	3
15.	Where were her brothers when she tackled a boy?	5
16.	Where did all this trouble take place?	4
17.	Do her brothers always help her fight?	1
18.	What kind of fight was this?	4
19.	Why were her brothers trying to protect her?	5
20.	Where are her parents when all this is going on?	2
21.	Why did she call herself a delinquent?	5
22.	Is she really a delinquent?	9
23.	Why wouldn't mother call her a delinquent?	3
24.	Where was her father?	7

Exercise B

Procedure: The vocabulary was carefully introduced and discussed. The children used dictionaries to discover definitions of the difficult words. (Children at this age level have very little patience for descriptive passages and even less patience if the vocabulary is difficult.) The selection was read several times and paragraphs one and two were read and reread until they believed they thoroughly understood what the author wanted to say. (This may seem to be in contradiction with their lack of patience, but these children really do want to know "just what the author is trying to say.") After the vocabulary was throughly discussed, I directed the children to read the selection orally.

Difficult Words

- wrinkle
- attic
- patchwork quilt
- frenzied
- lashing
- scudded
- frantically
- ripped
- creating
- wraith
- section
- brilliant
- rough-housed
- scornfully
- tackled
- ounce
- bruise
- disgusted
- delinquent
- grimly

"It was a dark and stormy night. In her attic..." to "...Gets back from where? And when?"

The complete model will be found on pp. 3, 4, 5 of A Wrinkle In Time by Madeleine L'Engle (New York: Ariel Books: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Inc., 1962).

Discussion

During the discussion, several pupils began writing down things the author discussed in the order they were presented. The reason was that the models were longer and more complex than those in previous lessons.

Students' chalkboard outline

I. storm

II. Meg afraid

III. Meg's problems:

    weather
    school
    behavior
    no friends
    family troubles

One, the author first told us about the wind storm. The storm was so bad it shook the house and Meg, too.

Two, Meg was afraid, but she wasn't usually the kind of girl that was afraid of weather.

Three, Meg had problems, lots of problems. The weather bothered her only because she had gotten into so much trouble. She was failing in school, her behavior and her big mouth got her into trouble. She had no friends because she was a trouble maker, even her brothers don't seem to like her. We don't even know why her mother should like her and her father is gone so we aren't sure what he thinks of Meg.

The selection was re-read; this time we were looking for details. The author described so many things, so very well, that we wanted to know how he described the night, trees, wind, clouds, moon, house, quilt, Meg, etc.

Objects	Descriptions
night	dark, stormy
trees	tossing
wind	frenzied lashing
clouds	scudded frantically
moon	ripped
shadows	creating wraith-like, raced along
quilt	old patchwork
Meg	wrapped in an old patchwork quilt
	sat on the foot of her bed
	watched
	shook
	afraid because everything else . . . on top of me . . . doing everything wrong
	dropped down to the lowest section
	rough-housed . . . to feel better
	acts like a baby
	her arms full of books
	threw the books on the side of the road
	tackled with every ounce of strength
	blouse torn
	big bruise under one eye
	she grimly calls herself a delinquent
teacher	spoke crossly
girls	said scornfully
boys	teased her, "dumb baby brother"
Sandy and Dennys	disgusted

Exercise C

The Writing Experience

Discussion of the selection led to the following summary written on the chalkboard. "We decided that Meg was a happy high school girl who loved her father very much and was doing very good in school until he left home. When this happened everything went wrong for Meg because she was upset."

The class deduced Meg was a high school student because she had been reminded by a girl "we aren't grammar school kids any more" and one of her teachers had spoken crossly. In high school you have many teachers and in grammar school you really only have one.

The full version was re-read orally. The discussion that followed mainly reviewed the materials covered in Exercises A and B. Many of the children were eager to begin their individual compositions, but a few were confused about how to employ detailed description for accurate reporting. At this time I thought it would be best to read some of the compositions that were completed, namely, Sandra Hall's, Gylda Moore's, and Vanessa Gamble's. This apparently was all that the reluctant pupils needed to begin writing. (See Children's Compositions, pp. 126-139.)

Evaluation Session

At the completion of these lessons, we had an evaluation session. Many aspects of our "new" English program were discussed and compared to past experiences. Although this discussion was not intended to culminate in compositions, Linda Booker, Stanley Brooks, Sandra Hall, Gylda Moore and Sammy Wilson wanted to write their views for Dr. Douglas. I believe that the children's attitude toward writing is clearly visible in the compositions that follow.

> When I was in third grade I did English but we used has, had, come, came, saw, seen, same, and some but in fourth grade We do English composition We write about what happened to me in my house or out. And I am very pleased with what I am doing and I am filled with self satifation when the teacher reads my storys to the room. We start from the very General to the very Specfic. And I hope that I can go on writing English composition's about what happened to me in or out of my house.
>
> --Linda Booker

> Last September we were only doing lessons in English like putting captiol's in the right place, and using has, had, have, was, wasn't, were and things like that, but every since Mrs. O. Nesper has been going to North Western we have been doing thing more specific like writing compositions about meaness, sadness, sorrfulness, and anguishness. But I like the English that we are doing now because I like to write composition and I like to write composition because they are self-satisfactory.
>
> --Stanley Brooks

[NOTE: When asked what "self-satisfactory" meant, Stanley replied, "Well, in Tree Wagon, we talked about Asenath being full of self-pity, so I could be satisfied with myself."

I then asked him, "What does self-pity mean?"

"To worry about yourself because no one else will do it for you."

"And what does self-satisfactory mean to you?"

He said, "Satisfactory means good or okay, and if you think you're doing okay, it's self-satisfactory."]

Last year when I was in third-grade, we learned how to use seen, saw, did, and done. We also leared about capital letters, period, commas, and question marks.

This year I am in fourth-grade. When we first started English we were learning about general terms to specific. Later we wrote small stories. Then the teacher copied small amounts of stories and wrote the general and specific things about the story on the board.

Now we are writing our own compositions. I think it is fun to share something with your classmates. So far I think that writing your own compositions is the best part of schoolwork.

--Sandra Hall

Last year in English we learned many things, one was how to put words in the right sentence. We learned contractions and what they meant, and we learned how to prounce words. When we got farther in the book we learned where to use capital letters and periods and question marks, and we also learned that names of people, pets, Streets, months, and days of the week began with capital letters, and we learned how to write letters.

Now we know what "non-literal" means and what "literal" means. We know how to make things that are not real make them seem like they are real. We learned how to write stories from General to Specific and Specific to General. We write Group Compositions and we learn to write compositions without the teachers help.

I like the English in Mrs. Nesper's room because you get to do stories and things like that on your own.

And in third grade you had to do it with the whole class.

--Gylda Moore

Last year in third grade in English we had to fill in sentences with see or saw, had or have, come or came. I didn't like that at all. But this year we write stories that happened, that made us laugh or cry, feel happy or sad, or something we loved has been stolen or lost, and we felt badly, and when we are mad with someone and fight the whole world. I like writing about what happened to my family, cousins, brothers, sister and of course, me. But when one makes a mistake, or who wants help someone who is finished can help him or her. When we are finished Mrs. Nesper reads everybodys stories out loud. Some people make mistakes and don't know it, but when they do know they make a mistake they can chang it and put it right. If we come upon a word that we dont know we look it up and have a little conversation and then we know the meaning for it. At first before we started the English in October, we copied things out of books. Then we wrote our own stories. I like English better than any other subject in school.

--Samuel Lee Wilson

Children's Compositions
Lesson 9

Note to teacher:

Many children wrote about their last day of school in third grade and their initial reactions to me. It is an annual procedure at Shepard School that on the last day of each school year the children receive their report cards and then are ushered in to meet their teacher for the forthcoming year. In June of 1964, I met with my new fourth grade class. I introduced myself and tried to orient them for the new school year. Just then Michael Holifield, who was to be one of my students, came up to the front of the room and announced he had found a ballpoint pen. When no one claimed it, I said he might keep it or give it away. At that point he threw the pen out of the window. I scolded him and turned this little incident into a safety lesson. It is this incident that children are recalling in these papers.

When I first came to room 308 I thought that Mrs. Nesper was going to be mean because most of the children were crying and saying I don't want to go to room 308. When we can in the room, she read the children a story about Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by R. L. Stevenson.

--William Atkinson

When I first came in room 308 I said to Myself. I am going to like her. She looks like she is'n't Mean, but when I saw her reaction with Michael, then I said to Myself "boy I better be good." In the summer my friend Harrit Collins said, "I wish that I could go back to the room I was in last year."

--Linda Booker

In June when I passed to fourth grade, it was the first time I had seen Mrs. O. Nesper. When I first seen her face she looked as if she was a nice teacher, and I thought she was until Micheal found a pencil and told the teacher. And the teacher said get rid of it and so Micheal threw it out of the window. Suddenly the teacher began to hollar and scream at Micheal. Then I got the feeling that she was mean. But when I was in he room for quite a while I found out that she was nice. The teacher began to hollar and scream at Micheal because the pencil could of stuck in someone's head

--Stanley Brooks

When I first came in 308 I did not like it at all. I had heard that dear Mrs. Nesper, was as mean as a bee who would sting you just to be funny.

Some time she talk s like it.

--Harriet Collins

When I frist came to 308 I saw a girl I knew. I said hello to the girl and Mrs. Nesper said sit in the last seat. And I said to Darrell she is mad at everyone and Darrell said yes. Then she said, "we are going to do some work, right?" Darrell said "yes" and then Michael H. found a pencil and took it to Mrs. Nesper. Mrs. Nesper told Michael he could have hit someone in the eye.

--Michael Covington

When I was in frist grade I missed school for two weeks. And the Truant Officer came to my house. My mother told him why I was missing school. I had a sore throat. The next day I was well because I had been taking little bitty pills. My mother wrote a note the next day, and the teacher who was Mrs. Poles said it was all right and she was glad that I was back in school.

--Vanessa Gamble

When I first came to room 308 I said to myself that Mrs Nesper was going to be nice. Then a boy named Michael found a pencil and he threw it out of the window Then she got mean about five minutes later she read the class a story Mrs. Nesper said that there was a girl walking down the street and boy threw a bottle of ink and banged her on the head.

--Kenzy Gary

Yesterday when Mrs. Nesper was talking to us about English, I was looking at my friend Linda Pickett. She was pounding on her desk with a pencil. I kept looking at the pencil. Then I started humming to myself. But I could still hear the teacher.

Mrs. Nesper, my teacher stopped talking and this is what she said: "Miss Hall if it dosen't bother you will you wake up and turn around?"

I turned around and the whole class looked at me. I felt ashamed of doing that. Mrs. Nesper didn't look as if she really meant that I was asleep, she looked at me and smiled.

--Sandra Hall

When
I frist came
to 308

On the last day of school the teacher said, "Carol you are going to 308 Mrs. O. Neper's room." The boys' and grils began to say that she is the meanest teacher in Shepard School. I almost began to cry but I said to myself "How do they know? Then the teacher said, "Carol 308." I came up to 308, I was afraid to come in. I came in the room. She said find a seat. I bought my lettle sister to school, she said "What are you doing in my room?" Then I said to myself she is a mean teacher. I went home and told my mother that the teacher in 308 hollered at Jennette. My mother said, "the meaner they are the better you learn."

--Carol Harris

The first day I was in 308 I. thought Mrs Nesper was going to be mean. She was angry not just anygry but she looked funny and mean.

--Mabel Harris

One day my mother went down town. She told me to stay at home and not to go to school today until she came back. Then I asked her can I go down to my cousins before lunch time. I was looking down on the ground I found a dime So I thought I would find more. But you know what I found? It wasnt money, I found the truant officer. I got so scared that I ran but he had seen my face. He knew what room I was in. He said don't you belong in school? I said yes Where do you live. I said 2918 W Roosevelt Rd. He said go home now and come to school this afternoon. I said yes sir and ran home as fast as I could.

--Earnest Hayes

1

My cousin came to my house because she needed some glasses. The truant offecer came to my cousin house.' My aunt told the truant offecer that Barbara need some glass and Barbara had gone to her cousin's who lived 1135 S. Sacramento. So the truant offecer came to our house, and my mother told the tall bald headed man that Barbara needed some glasses. Next week Barbara would be in school

--Michael Holifield

On the last day of school my friend, and I went to our new room 308 My friend Sammy said that the teacher in that room was not nice at all. When we went to the room, the teacher said find you a seat. Michael found a pencil. Mrs. Nesper said throw the pencil away. Michael was looking for the garbage can. Larry said "throw it out of the window," and Michael threw it out of the window. When old Mrs. Nesper came she was mad. I was thinking that Mrs. Nesper should be dead, but now I like old Mrs. Nesper.

--Michael Holifield

One day I was playing in the house and my mother told me, "stop playing in the house." My mother told me "Stop playing" once more. I paid no attention I just kept playing. And then all of the sudden, I stepped on a nail. The blood was runnig all over my foot and it was running all over my mother's hands. My mother tied my foot up and took me to the doctor. The doctor said I had to stay with the doctor for two weeks and on a Sunday I could go home. I had to stay there for two weeks. On a Friday after noon, the Truant office was standing at the door and my mother said "come in and have a seat." And they talked about me being out of school.

--Sandra Keys

When I first came to 308 I was so afride that I said I will be good and I will get food make in spelling and arithmetic and Social Studie and science. Mrs. O. Nesper said if you do your very best work in school you will get very good mark in school.

--Larry McDaniel

During passing time every body was talking about which room they wanted go to. I told Edna Johnson I wanted to go to 300 but she said that's a mean teacher. Now she said I should try to go to 308. So when passing day came Miss Brusin said the people who were going to different rooms go in different places. When she took us to 308 all the other kids got angry and began to cry so I got scared. Machael Holifield found a pencil and he told Mrs. Nesper she said throw it away. So Machael threw it out the window and Mrs. Nesper began to scream at Machael, then I really got scared and was really made at Edna. When I got home and told Edna what happened, all she did was laugh. And when we came back to school I found out she wasn't as mean as I thought she was.

--Gylda Moore

One day my mother told me to go to the store for some bread. When I got there, there was a big line of people and I had to wait for a while until every body went. Then I could buy what I wanted. I was telling myself how crazy I am. for wanting to go to the store for mother.

--Iris Ocasio

When My Brother had the Chicken pops

Once when my brother had the chicken pops we had to make him eat soup. When we were finished he fell asleep. So we went to play. He stayed home for a week and after that week the truant officer came to see if he was sick. He knocked on the door and I opened it. He asked me if my mother was home. I told him that my mother was in the kitchen and he came in and sat down. I went and told my mother and she told me to stay in the kitchen. I tried to hear but the TV. was on, so when he left, I asked my mother what did he want. But she did not say anything. So the next day my brother went to school.

--Latricia Patrick

I have a cousin that is 12, years old. And I have a cousin the is 11, years old. And when I go up to there house I play with my cousins. And my big cousin fights her sister. Her mother tells them to stop fighting. I tell the big one to stop fighting with her sister.

--Linda Pickett

i

When I fistr came to 308 I thought My teacher was going to be nice but she turned out to be mean. I thought this because one of my firends found a pen in a desk and she told him to throw it out. He told his cousin to throw it out the window so he threw it out himself.

--Ronald Saulter

ii

One summer day a boy pulled the alarm on the red fire box. The fireman came and the boy said, "I didn't do it but a boy named Ronald did." They took me down to the fire station. The other boy came too. He finally gave up and they let me go.

--Ronald Saulter

One summer day something happened to me. My mother gave me some tickets so I could go to California. I was going by train. I was going to see my Aunt Marion, my Uncle Ranson and my cousin Gregory Southern. When I got there we had a lot of fun. We went to Disneyland and after that we went to several movie stars home.

--Larry Travis

i

When I first came to 308 I was shy because I didn't know anyone. There was a fat boy that had a seat across from me and I asked him was my teacher mean, but he said nothing. I asked a skinny girl that sits in the first row. She said my teacher was mean. So I kept on believing it until just now.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

ii

A Truant Officer story

When I frist moved over here, there were a truant officer in the gas station. He asked me why I wasn't in school, I said I don't have a transfer So he said come on to school. So the next day I came to school without a transfer.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

The first day when I was in Mrs. Onesper room I thought she was very mean because my brother and cousin said, "you will not like Mrs. Onesper because she will scold you.

She will not take your classmates on any trips". And then, I said, "I like Mrs. Onesper if you are good to her, she will be good to you. And then I said Mrs. Onesper is a fine teacher.

--Lona Wilson

The Truant Officer

One day the Truant Officer came to the corner of Morzart and Fillmore. Then he ased me was I suppose to be in school and I told him I was in Kindergarten and I only went in the morning. So Mr. Scott said I was a nice boy. I told my mother and she was happy and so was I.

--Samuel Wilson

Children's Compositions
Lesson 10

Note to teacher:

The children wrote individual stories in the classroom immediately following the lesson. I circulated among them and helped children who wanted words spelled or who had questions about mechanics. Some pupils said, "I know what I want to say but I don't know how to get started." I asked the child to tell me what he wanted to write. After listening attentively I said, "Now write it just as you've told me. Later if you don't like it, you may change it."

I got mad at my mother, she gave my brother a dime and gave me a nickel and I went over my uncle's house and he gave me a dime. I had fifteen cents. I told my borther I had more than he. And then he asked where did I get that dime and I told him.

--William Atkinson

One day My sister called Me from the Window, when I was over My girlfriend's house. My girlfriend's Mother said Linda your sister is calling you and I said never Mine her she is the crazyest girl there is on earth. Then she said what are you talking about and then I said she makes me sick on the stomach. that is why I am over here, I am running away from that old crow.

--Linda Booker

One day while we were out for recess, we were playing fighting with another room. A boy in another room hit Hosea Sims, Hosea thought it was me so he came and hit me and so I hit back.

Hosea took by the neck when I was pulling my coat off, And I hit Hosea in the jaw, then I tripped him and hit him in the nose and his nose began to bleed. The Miss Moran came to pick the room up from the playground. When she saw the fight she told us to break it up she even tried to break it up herself, but she couldn't pull us apart, she even told us to break it up again but we paid no attention. Finally when we did break it up we had to go home and stay for the rest of the morning, and our mothers had to come up at 12:30. When we came back to school we made friends.

--Stanley Brooks

i

I was mad at James because I found a $1.00. Every time I found money he would say it was his. He lost it when he was pairting the chest. When he took the $1.00 my mother told me to lets him keep it. So I got mad at her too I did not speak to anyone after that not even my brother because he middled me. So I did not speak to anyone for a week. After that week, on Monday, I did not say much. James said, Tell your mother "good morning." I said hi very low. But that was the only thing that made me say something to my mother, James and George. But after my father found out. He had sent me a roundtrip ticket to Texas from Chicago.

--Harriett Collins

ii

I am talking all the time not, just talking all the time but I have a big mouth too. Friday in school I did not say a thing to nobody, so every once in a while Mrs. Nesper would come, pass me and said. "Are you sick, Harriett?" And I would say no. But if I was at home and did not say a word, my mother would say "Lord have Mercy, I know this child is sick because she has not said a word all day." I do not like those words so I would say, " I am not giong to talk all ways Baby D."

--Harriett Collins

[Note: "Baby D" is Harriett Collins' Mother's nickname.]

One morning the boy's went to gym. I was on Larry McDaniel's team he told me to sit up straight. I said stop pushing me, he hit me and ran to his place. I ran up to him and hit him back and took my place. He said he was going to get me. When lunch time came, everyone was in the schoolyard but Larry. I walked in front of him and he didn't do what he said at all.

--Michael Covington

i

One night my mother had gone to the store and my brother had to keep me. He had made my little sister and brother go to bed, and he made fun of me all the time. So I told him that I was going to run away. He said he didn't care I said all right you will see. So I went in my room and packed my clothes and went out the back door, and I met my mother coming from the store, and I heard what they were saying. She asked where was I and my brother said "she ran away." She was going out of the door when I was coming in. She saw me, and came back into the house. I told her I'll never do that again. Then my brother never bothered with me any more.

--Vanessa Gamble

ii

It was in the summer, and I asked my mother if I could go outside, and she said no. My sister said she was going to run away and I said I was too. My cousins said they were going to tell.

My sister said she didn't care so I said I didn't care either. Well they told my mother what my sister and I had said and boy did we get it.

--Vanessa Gamble

One time I was coming from my grandmother house.

I asked my mother can I go to the theater and she said no. I said your bother is gone and he can go tomorrow. She said you wait to go tomorrow. Then I said you always let him. After that I said I wish I was dead.

--Kenzy Gary

One afternoon I ran home for lunch. I wrung the bell. And my brother came down to open the door. I ran upstairs and ate my lunch. Then I said "Mama may I have a dime?" She gave all of my other sisters a dime and I wanted one.

She said, "You can't have a dime." So I said, "Yes ma'm." I felt like my mother didn't like me. But I was wrong she did. I went in my room and started crying.

"San-dra" my mother called. "It is time to go to school." I went to school and stopped crying. And that evening I got a dime.

--Sandra Hall

One time my mother had gone shopping with my little sister Jennette. My big sister had to stay with me. I asked her could I play with a game. She said no. I said you are not going any where. I ran to the door and ran out she ran after me. She caught me and brought me back in the house. I said could I play a game? She said yes and I played playland with my sister Jean.

--Carol Harris

i

When my Mother was going to the Store I asked my Mother could I go and she no, and I said I was going to run away and go to My Cousin's house and spend a night. My Mother cane to the house and I ran and ran so far that said "Help, help, Uncle."

--Mabel Harris

ii

One day I was playing in the back and my Mother called me and she called me and. I did not come because she was a grouch and she was mean to me. I said to myself that I hate my mother.

--Mabel Harris

one day after school I didn't come home I went to play with my friend. When I got home it was dark, and when I got in the house my mother was asleep. My grandmother was up. She said "you see your brothers been home and you just now getting here" And she said "where have you been all night." I said out side playing and she kept scolding me until I went to bed. Then I said I'd be glad to leave here and go over my cousins so I can be away from you and go out side without asking anyone.

--Earnest Hayes

One day I was at home with my mother and she was going to whip me and I got so angry at her. I almost hit her. She started to laugh and you know what I did? I left home and she didn't even miss me. You know Why? I came back home the same night.

--Sarah Johnson

One nice summer day my mother took my big brother down town to the bank. I had to stop and asked her why she didn't take us too. She said I am not taking you all today because I have to stop and get a lot of things, so thats why I am not taking you all. I said oh shoot. Then my mother said when she gets back, she was going to whip me, and then I waved my hand at her but she did not see me. Then I said I wish I would die, then she would not let me go down town with her any more.

--Sandra Keys

One day Kenzy said to william I am going to beat you up and wheen we got out side Kenzy hit williar and William said to Kenzy you is goin to get beat up.

--Milton McCarter

One Tuesday Morning around ten fifteen at Shepard School, Andrew McDaniel was suspended from Shepard School for a whole two weeks. He was suspended this is why. I was suspended when Miss Morgan was talking I started repeating every thing she said and then she stop talking and started talking to me and She Said you have a nice milkman But he said he is nt going to have a little ponk like you telling him what to do and then thats when I started talking back to her and then she told me to get out and go to the office and tell the clerk to hold you there until I get there and when she got there she had me suspended for two whole weeks and then she told everyone to shut up and this is what I did for two whole weeks. I worked on the Bowman dairy company at 4201 North Kilpatrick Ave the Route number for the truck was 659 our truck number really is unit 38 and when I get off the Milk truck I went to Blue Ribbon Every time I get off of work and go home My Mother tells me two get out of her way and find something else to do and I said OK MaMa.

--Andrew McDaniel

My brother said "Larry Larry where are you and I did not answer him. He ran back to the house and stood in front and called "Larry" again. Then he went back into the house. My mother came out of the house then and said my name three times. I ran to the back of the yard and went up to Samuel's house and said I was running away from home.

--Larry McDaniel

One scary snowy night mother took my two sisters shopping. After she had gone me and my brother Kevin looked at telivision. He kept on running out and back in, once he stayed in my sisters room and played some records. So I changed channels. Suddenly, my brother hit me. I began to fight him back. When Kevin wasn't looking I wrote a note to mother saying I ran away. But I really didn't I just hid in the house. Mother might have been screaming at Kevin because it was his fault. Sandra might have been fighting Kevin because he might have made Mother sick. But after all of this, my mother came home and read the note. Sandy looked and she saw all of my things so she looked and she finally found me. And now mother usually never keeps me home with him.

--Gylda Moore

One day My Mother went shoping with my sister and I had to stay home with My two sister's and brother Raymond. I started to play with my brother and he hit me and I hit him them I said, "I will run far far away and you will be sorry."

As I dashed though the kitchen door and went though the back door and then I forgot that the door will be locked if I close it. As I closed the door I ran down the steps and went though a alley and around the house. Then I went up the steps and tried to open the door, then I cried out "you make me sick Raymond" and he said, "now what did I do this time, Iris!"

--Iris Ocasio

One evening my brother Larry played with me and we weren't hitting hard, so he hit me hard and I told my mother. She said it must not hurt, because you aren't crying. So I said you'll be sorry when I run away. So I packed my suitcase and left. My mother followed so I crouched under the porch with my suitcase. When she came out I saw her but she didn't see me. I walked until I got tired. I was so tired that when I looked up at the sign it said, California St. So I sat on the ground and tried to rest. I started walking again. When I saw my cousin Barbara she asked me why didn't the whole family come, so I told her I was running away. I walked until I got to California St. again. When I got to my house the door was open so I walked in and put my suitcase down and saw my mother. I told my mother I wasn't going to run away any more.

--Latricia Patrick

Once time I was talk to Iris Ocasio. Mrs. O. Nesper told me to truin around from talking to Iris. And I started to cry. But zust as I was going to cry. I start to clean out my desk. I took all of my books and then I looked at Mrs. Nesper. Then I put all my books back in my desk. And I start to listen to Mrs. Nesper.

--Linda Pickett

When I was a Chicken

Last Saturday on March 6, My father gave me five dollars in the morning at 8:30. And then in the afternoon he went to my uncle's house in his 1964 car. And then when he went I ran to the store, but I had to walk through the alley to go to the store. It was a long walk to go to the store in the alley. Then when I was a lettle bit to the store A big boy said stop. I said "for what?" he said "gave your money." I was scared to gave my money to him. so I started running home. but he ran faster than me and he caught me and took my five dollars. and I was angry and I started going home.

--Eldwin Santana

One morning my borther. Jake got out of bed and. I call him a neme and he grabbed me and hit me and. I hit him back. My Mother let him hit me all he wanted. Then I kicked him. And he picked me up and threw me on the table. I got a knife. And then he put me at the table and. I did not eat I did not eat dinner or anything.

--Ronald Saulter

once out for recss Hosea and Stanley were fighting when the bell rang, Miss Moran came out side Stop it, but they paid on attention. Then tommy pulled them a part, Hosea was mad at Stanley and Miss Moran. She told Larry to take Hosea to the office, She and Stanley and Hosea had to go home and the Mothers had to come to the school.

--Hosea Sims

1

On summer day when I wanted to go swiming, I asked my Mother, may I go swimming." She said "no." So I went to my room and stayed in there until two days were over. My Mother said "maybe I should let him go swimming." I should have gone because my Parent thought I had gone swimming but I was in the closet.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

On day when I lived on Tremble, I like a girl name Pat. I gave her everything I got to satisfy her, but when she slapped me I had to do it. I hit her in the mouth and then she stared to cry and I left. I didn't speak to her again.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

One afternoon on a Thursday when I came home, my mother was cooking and she told me to set the table. I put the plates on the table and put a spoon and fork in each plate. Me and my brother had a day each to wash dishes. It was my brother's day to wash. He said that it was my day to wash dishes and we began to scold each other, then my mother said "Cornelius your, sister washed dishes yesterday. I'm not scolding you but she did the dishes, because I told her to give Rena a bath and she was washing dishes. It's your day."

So my mother said to wash dishes together, so I said "you'll be sorry, when I kill my self." You'll be sorry, you'll be crying and saying its all my fault. You'll be wringing your hands in anguish, and saying if I'd only understand her better she would be with us. Now its to late to cry. If I'd only understand.

--Lona Wilson

One day when I asked my mother could I cook the dinner for tonight? She said, "no you can't." And when she turned around, I said you are a dirty lady. Then she turned around and found the extension cord. And I jumped on the refrigerator and said, "When I die," I will haunt you every night."

--Samuel Lee Wilson

Children's Compositions
Lesson 11

When I was with Andrew and his brother and Samel, Michael, Larry, Earnest, Tommie, Stanley, Kenny. Ronald, and Milton And Eldwin started to run and everyone ran after him. Larry caught him and Larry let him go and he ran again and I caught him and then he waited until we got in front of his house and he ran up the steps and his sister came out and said "don't hit Eldwin" and we said "we don't want to hit him we are trying to stop the other boys and girls from hitting him and we started home and Milton had trouble he'd torn a girl's dress.

--William Atkinson

i

One Friday I asked my Mother for fifteen cents to pay for milk at school and my Mother said to me "Linda if you don't leave me alone I am going to knock the ever living stuff out of you." I went to school and I cryed all the way and when I got there I was so upset that I asked to go to the bathroom and whem I went I thought about my Mother hollering at me. So the very next Friday my Mother gave me the fifteen cents for milk money at school.

--Linda Booker

ii

One hot summer day I was selling snowballs at a snowball stand and all of a sudden a boy said from a window "Linda." I did not answer. I knew that it was my brother because I know his voice when I hear it. The reson that I did not answer is that I hate him, he is nothing but a slob in my house. So that is why I was working at the stand, to get some money to go over to my cousin's house and stay with her until I Make up My mine to go back to that house where my slobey brother was. I hate him so much I feel like I can hang him up by his ten toes.

--Linda Booker

iii

One day my mother had to go some where and she left my brother and I at home to be in charge of the house. I told my brother to wash the dishes and he said that I had to wash then so I did and on purpase I broke one of my mother's plates. He told me I was going to get it, but I said to him "no I am not yor are beacaus Mama told you to wash them yourself." He did not know that I did it on purpose.

--Linda Booker

One Monday when I did not behave very good my teacher was coming home with me to talk with my mother. As we crossed the street I met my friend, Micheal. My teacher told me to wait out side until she came out of the store. As she was approching the store door I began to think weather I should stay and wait or weather I should run home. I looked in the store and saw my teacher getting change for five dollars. Micheal said I know what you are thinking, you should run home while you've got a chance so I ran home and looked in the window to see if my teacher was coming, but she weren't. She had gotten in her car and went home. The next day when I went back to school I was very glad because she had forgot what had happened.

--Stanley Brooks

When I was in 204 I was doing my work and my teacher walked around to my desk and called my name and pointed to the back of the room. I turned around and saw my mother she smiled at me and she and the teacher walked in the hall. When I came home I asked her why did she come to school she didn't tell me.

--Michael Covington

i

One day my mother and brother had gone to the store. So I was there with my little sister and brother, my brother had to go to bed. He got out of the bed when my mother and brother came back. So my brother asked where was my little brother he called and called called, He asked my sister and I where was my little brother. Then my mother called he never did answer. They heard him when he said "what!" And my mother said didn't you hear me calling you?" He said yes my mother said next time you are going answer me next time aren't you boy?" Did he get it. And my mother made him get back into the bed.

--Vanessa Gamble

ii

One day my mother had gone to work. And my father had gone to work too, and I was in school. My teacher called my mother on the telephone and she had to come up and I asked my mother while did she have to come up here. I didn't know until Friday afternoon. My mother said it was about some work books, and I said it wasn't nothing worg She said no.

--Vanessa Gamble

It was a warm day and my mother had gone over to her friend's house. She left my two biggest sisters in charge of the house. One of my sisters was 14 and my other one was 20. My oldest one who is 20 went to bed because she didn't feel well and my other sister was left in charge.

My sister told us not to make any noise. I went in my room and read a book. Then my two brothers came into my room boxing. I was sitting on my bed when they came in. At first they were on the floor, and they were making lots of noise. Then they got on the bed and started to wrestle. My brothers knocked me out of the bed and I hit my head on the wall. I started crying. My sister came in and said "I'm going to tell mama. I told you all not to make any noise." My brothers looked at each other and laughed.

I stayed up all night with my sisters one was 11 and one was 14. When my mother came home she told me to get in the bed. But I was scared becaused I thought I was going to get a spanking. But the next morning my two brothers got a spanking for wrestling on my bed.

--Sandra Hall

When I broke a bottle of milk

Ond day I came home from Social Center, and into the kitchen I went to eat. I went in the closet to get a plate. I opened the refrigerator to get some milk. I tried to get the milk but I couldn't get it. I jumped up to get it and it fell down. My big sister came in to the kitchen and say "boy you going to getit!" I said I did not do it. It fell down and broke." She just said "you are going to getit." She told my mother that I broke a bottle of milk"? I said "no it fell. She said "get the broom and get it up." And boy I was scared.

--Carol Harris

One day in the summer my mother went down town and left me in charge of the house and my mother told me to wash the dishs and clean the house and she would give me sone money to by me sone candy I wased the dishs I broke my Mother's new cup. And I thought my Mother was going to kill me when mother came home I told my mother and she said I an not going to eat it. any she gave me some money.

--Mabel Harris

One Saturday I had to stay at home and baby sit. My mother was gone to the hospital and my grandmother had gone over my cousins. My brother out side playing. When he came in I said can I go out and play some while you stay here" he said yes. I went on out then, I thought of something, I said, wonder whats going to happen when I get home. Then I saw my brother, I said "Is. Mama home?" he said. I said "What I She say? he said nothing. I thought, wonder will she scold me? I was scared until I got home. She didn't scold but she said "why are your shoes wet and your brothers aren't?"

--Earnest Hayes

Sunday my Aunt told me to go to the back of the church and sit down. I sat down, and my friend named Marvin and Harry came to sit with me. I was singing and my Aunt told me to git up and set over on the other side, and I looked at her with my one eye and she pull my ear and said Marvin is very bad and Harry is to.

--Michael Holifield

One day I got put back in the third and when I got home that evenine my mother said I heard that you got put back, and I said yes. When she told my sister to get the rope I was so scared that I almost jumped out of my clothes.

--Sarah Johnson

One hot summer day when I was in Forest Mississippi. My sister and I were playing in the house. Then I got so tired so I said check. I went on the back porch. And all of a sudden I saw a chicken come on the porch, and I was getting ready to run. There was some bottles on the side of the porch, and I ran and fell on them and broke one. My sister came out on the porch, and said I was going to get a whipping. I asked Mother and she said she is going to whip me. My Mother didn't whipe me for two weeks. I thought she had forgot about it. In two more weeks she told me she was only playing. And I asked my mother why waited for four weeks to tell me.

--Sandra Keys

Wen I store white may little brouther I was reed the book and I told him to sit In his chired and ulena and I get arring at him and hit him and he store to cry and he said he was gone to tell on me and I told him that I dond ceary what he tell he should of sit down wen I told him

--Velma Lee Madison

[Note: I believe this is what Velma tried to say. She is a new arrival from Mississippi. No records are transferred from the state, but her report card read "low average ... grade 4 ... 12 years old."

When I started with my little brother I was reading the book and I told him to sit in his chair and listen and I got angry at him and hit him and he started to cry and he said he was going to tell on me and I told him that I don't care what he tells he should of sit down when I told him.]

yesterday after school Me and Tommie went to Blue Ribbon Food Market 3034-36 W R Rd. we started to throw snow ball at buses at some Marsh school kids This is what happen They were coming pass Blue Ribbon and started calling us names so picked up some snow ball and threw then one boy names Frank was going to throw some dirt with glass in it but we stopped him just in time and then the police pulled up and stopped He caught a boy name Jean and then one of the police grabbed his gun and said Stop or we will shoot but we were afraid to stop and then they started chasing thier car They did not catch us so they gave up and then we went home, sweet home.

--Andrew McDaniel

One day my mother had to come up to the school and I did not no what she was saying and the next day she said "Larry came to me, I have something to tell you. Your teacher said you do not do your work and all you do is sit down and play." So the next day came and she did not tell me she was coming up to school again She went to school I did not know she was coming she was at the door with Mrs. Moran. Mrs. Moran said Miss Buries will you pleased come to this mother, I will take care of the room." I was doing better this time.

--Larry McDaniel

One day my cousin came to my house and I had my mother's transistor raidee. She to me to put it down I paid no attention to her. I dropped it and I got whipped.

--Cynthia Means

Once when me and some of my sisters and brothers were home and my mother had left, I broke a glass. My sisters and brothers said that mother was going to get me. They kept on saying "Gylda's going to get it when mother comes home." So at around 7:30 mother came home and after she got her coat off they told her what happened and they said get her, but she didn't. They kept on making mother upset so that she all most got them.

--Gylda Moore

One day when I was in 204 I was in third grade and I was doing my English work, Mother came in to my room and told my teacher to give me my rain coat and boots. I did not know what was going on so I went on with my work. Then my teacher said "Hello Mrs. Ocasio" I was shocked because I thought my Mother had gone to work. My teacher told me to put on my boots and My rain coat and go with my Mother.

--Iris Ocasio

In school at open house, my mother was talking to the teacher in the door way and when they finished talking my mother smiled at me. When the teacher let us go home my mother wasn't there but my brother Lamarr was home. I came in and put on my play clothes. While my brother was looking at T.V. I was doing my homework. When I was finished, I was so anxious that I couldn't sit still. So my brother told me to sit down but I didn't. So he tried to woop me but I ran in the kitchen and hid. He couldn't find me so I came out of my hidding place. As soon as my brother was going to hit me someone knocked on the door. I opened the door and it was my mother. So I asked my mother what did the teacher say to you, but my mother didn't tell me.

--Latricia Patrick

i

One time my mother was in her room where she sleeps. I was in the kicthen and I brike a glass. Then my mother asked me what had fallen in the kicthen. I told her nothing had fallen in the kicthen. I thought that I was going to get punished that day. But when she found out I had broken her best glass, I got punished. She told me that I could not watch television that day.

--Linda Pickett

ii

It was all in on Tuesday afternoon when I came home from school. I found out that my cousin Dainie and her boy friend were planning on taking me to the Regal. I didn't know where it was until I got there and I found out there were people on the stage singing. The Shock Gun mens were there also Bobby Washington, Magon Lanace, and many more. This was my frist time ever seeing a stage show. The lights were so pretty and the stage was all kinds of colors. Them Herman and I stared to fight over the Pop Corn, but when I caught him watching the show I got a hand full.

--Linda Pickett

Last Monday night when I was playing on the bed with my brother. My mother said "Eldwin stop playing on the bed and go wash the deshes so I started wash deshes. Then when I allmost finished, I droped a plate on the floor and my little brother said to my mother Eldwin broke a plate and my mother said Eldwin pick it up, and, Then I pick everyone up and I went to see the TV.

--Eldwin Santana

Last Thursday we walked a boy home after. That was over all the boy went home some went over the railroad track I went under the vioduct and I met Michael. When I got home, my brother said." oh boy are you going to get it you came in the house 5 minutes after 5.

Im going to tell mama so." I waited for mama to come but, when my brother told Mother she did not pay attention because she had a hard day. Was I glad!

--Ronald Saulter

On day whan I went to Herzl School. I had a bad experience My mother cane to The school with a belt. I didn't know what it was for, because I had not done anything wrong. So I said this to myself, long as I know I had done nothing I have got nothing to worry about. So I kept working and working

--Tommie Lee Watkins

One Saturday morning I was the first one out of bed. I went and washed up. I put on my clothes, turned on the T V. I turned it up so loud my brother and sister woke. I said, "why don't you you two go back to sleep." My brother said, "this is just an out rage, you'll a mean old girl. "So I am, so I am, but this mean old girl, is going to hurt this nice old boy.

"If you hit me I'll tell Mama. If you do I'll beat you up. And I'll tell mother on you. You little rat. I'll hurt you for sure too.

--Lona Wilson

One Thursday evening at 9:00 o'clock I had a balloon and held it over the stove. And my little sister stood by me and the balloon burst and poped on her head and after a second it fell off with some skin off her head. So she ran in the front and told my mother and I got the whipping of my life. And had to go to bed at 6:00 o'clock for a month. And boy I'm sure nice to her.

--Samuel Lee Wilson

Children's Compositions
Lesson 12

i

When my mother had a baby I was glad, because when Saturday and Sunday came I get more money. I have to keep the baby, my brother Milton said "you think you are something and I said I am something. I'm a boy. Then I went to Tony's store and brought me a pop for 14 cents, and 5 cookies, and a banana for 5 cents. And I got it out of 50 cents and I had 26 cents left and I put it in my pigie bank.

--William Atkinson

ii

I got angry at my cousin when she let someone take my bicycle and I could have beat her to death. I went to her house and told her mother and she got a beatting because she took it out when I didn't tell her that she could haven't I still was angry because it was new, I had never rode it before. And then I went in the house and stayed there for a week. My father said that he would get me another bicycle and I was glad to get another bicycle and I said that I would never let no one ride it but me.

--William Atkinson

i

One night I went to the store with my mother and when we got back, my father said that my uncle called and said that my grandmother's sister-in-law called him and said that she had died. My brother and I cried and cried for a long time. We were scared even to go to the store for my Mother at 6:00 o'clock in the evening. We didn't go to school for two weeks and I fought every body although

I got beat up I was miserably shook and afraid to do any thing but fight. When I got over, it I apologized to the people I fought.

--Linda Booker

ii

One day I went home for lunch. My Mother sent my brother to the store and she asked me to go with him. Before we left, Mama said to us I will give you a dime each, so we went to the store. When we got there, my brother didn't have the money in his pocket. I said oh, oh, are you going to get it and he said what are you talking about, and I said you lost her money. He said no I ain't, so we went home. My brother told my mother that he gave it to me and I lost it. I said you big story teller. My Mother whipped me and she didn't whip him. I got so mad at my Mother and my brother too. My Mother gave my brother a dime and he ate his lunch and she sent me out to find it. All of a sudden he ran up to me and said, "I found it in the store and Mama said for you to go to school." I said I didn't even eat my lunch. He said, "tough luck sister.", and I said "I'm going to make your head tough if you don't go to school boy." He said I'm not going to school and I said to myself "oh that fat old pig Mother of mine."

--Linda Booker

iii

One day Mrs. Moran was talking to me because I was talking to Cynthia Means and she told me to go to my brother's room so I said I didn't want to go so she took me and I was afraid, shooked, mad, and ashamed of myself to be in second grade. Everyone looked at me. I told my brother not to tell my mother, so he said he woundn't and at 3:15 when I came home my Ma asked me why I was in there I said to my self oh let me think of a lie to tell her. I told her. I told her that I was talking during Geaargofe

--Linda Booker

iv

When my step father went into the hospital I was afraid that he might die and two weeks later the hospital called and said that he had died. And after we went to his funeral my mother was on the couch and all of a sudden she ran out of the house over to my cousin's across the hall and she said she saw my step father with the suit on that he had on when he died. From then on we slept over to my cousin's house until we moved to are new house.

--Linda Booker

i

One morning I went down to my uncle's house to ask him for a quater to by a booster club card. When he got ready to get it for me I saw a plastic white flower on the dresser. He told me he had it every since 1951, when his grandmother had died. I began to walk out sadly, my uncle ask me what was the matter. I said I just felt sorry for you when you said your grandmother had died. When I got to school I gave the money to Miss Moran and after recess she gave me my card. When I got it I pined it on my shirt, and she told me we were going to have a movie for the people who has booster card.

--Stanley Brooks

ii

One day my uncle came over my house. I didn't know what he had came for. I heard him say something, but I didn't hear him so clear. The only thing I heard him say clearly was that it was an emergency. I didn't no until the next day why he had came. My mother had told me why he had came. She said he had told her that my grandfather had passed, and that he lives in Yazoo, Mississippi, and that she was going there Friday night. Suddenly I got the feeling I was going because when ever she gets a pleasant look on her she lets me do what ever I want to. But I had forgot one thing, that pleasant look that she had on her face might not be there Friday. When Friday came she told me I couldn't go, and that she was going to take my two brothers. When they left my aunt came to take care of me. The whole day was beautiful, and I had lots of fun, but from Sunday until Wednesday, when my mother came back, everything went wrong. My aunt didn't run things like my mother did. The only that wasn't different was that she cooked the same things that my mother cooked. When my Mother came back I was glad because everything went right again.

--Stanley Brooks

The Frist time I went to Texas

It was a nice summer day in 1960 my family was so happy they did not no what to do. We were going to Texas. But my own father, grandmother and I did not like it one little bit. So after we were down there my stepfather, mother, and grandmother acted like they were so glad. But after my 3 year old brother was born my stepfather's grandmother acted like a fool. She slapped me with a switch across my eye one night. She said I called her a liar. I don't no know what she said I called her a liar's for, but whatever it was for, she hit me. I got out of bed and told her what I thought of her and what I thought of my stepfather and what I would try if my stupid mother was not close by. She got back into the bed and left me alone.

I had to go to the hospital and my mother moved. After we moved I was sent to school in Texas. I hated my mother. One day after school was out, I sat on the front porch and wrote my father a letter. My bus ticket was there the next day. So when I got to Chicago, I called my grandmother and she called my father and told him I was back.

So I took a bath and went to bed in my aunts house. The next day my father and grandmother were there to take me home with them.

--Harriett Collins

One day I had to come in the house to eat supper. When I finished eating I said to my mother can I go out. She said I had to get my haircut first. When she finished cuting my hair, she said why don't you read the book Miss Pickell to me. By the time I finished reading, it was to late to go out.

--Michael Covington

It was on a Saturday when my grandmother died. I was very upset then. I didn't go to Sunday school. So when I came back to school Larry McD. made me sick that Monday. I was chewing in class so Miss Moran made me put it in the garbage. Larry McD. came behind me and he hit me so I told the Miss Moran. She asked me did I hit him back I said yes. Larry McDainel said he was going to beat me up and I said no you aren't. He said wait out side then but I didn't because I ran. My mother asked me why were I half out of breath and I said I was running and I got scared, I thought she was going to whip me. So I said it was a boy name Larry McD.

and she said next time I was going to get it. Every thing seemed to go wrong for me that day. Miss Moran didn't understand then Larry McDainel made me sick, then I was scared of my mother.

--Vanessa Gamble

Once my mother left to go to St. Louis, to see my grendmother, and she was going to stay for a week. Joanne, my baby sister was going with her. Mama started packing the night before they left.

The next day when I got up my mother was dressing Joanne, she was two years old and she didn't know how to dress herself. "Good morning, go and get dressed and eat your breakfast," answer mama. I did as I was told.

At 5:00 my mother left with my baby sister. I started crying. My father was cooking. I went into the kitchen. Daddy said "Don't cry, you're a big girl now." Then he told my sisters to get the table fixed.

When we got through eating we looked at television, then we went to bed. The whole week didn't seem right without mama and Joanne. We had to do everything different. I didn't talk or play, but my father always was there to cheer me up. In one place it was fun and in another place it was all wrong. My sister was putting on her coat, and hit me by mistake. I started fighting.

The next week my mother came back and she talked about St. Louis, and she brought home something. We didn't know what she had in the bag. Finally she open it and it was some of the things they grew in St. Louis.

--Sandra Hall

When I got
Upset

When my mother got sick I was so upset that I went in the kitchen and broke a glass. I got angry at my little brother and said don't call my name. My sister said it is time to go to bed. I got in the bed and went to sleep. The next morning I got up and put on my clothes. I ate my breakfast and went to school. The teacher said Carol come and do this arithmetic problem. I went to do it but I was too upset the teacher said "sit down Carol." The next morning a wonderful thing happened my mother was not sick any more and every thing was better.

--Carol Harris

One day when Cynthia was having her fit she made me so upset that I said to myself why don't Cynthia stop having those fits. Cynthias fits upset me. I was shocked and even afraid that she might hit some one.

--Mabel Harris

One night after my mother had come from work, she got in the bed. The next thing I knew she was sick, she told me to go and get someone to go to the hospital with her and said she was going to have a baby. The next three days she came home. She told me to fix the baby bottle and hold the baby and wash the clothes. And before this year is over, she will be telling me to feed him and clean him when he wets. I will be real upset when she starts back to work.

--Earnest Hayes

Last spring my mother was going to Mississippi. My mother was packing on Monday. Monday night at 12:00 A.M. my father was at his cousin because my father's mother had died. My mother was going to

Mississippi with my grandmother because my mother's father had died. My father was upset my brother was crying, but I was crying and holloring and screaming because it was April 20 and it was my birthday. My mother and father were going away, and on top of all this trouble my father was driving down a one way street and ran a red light.

--Michael Holifield

On one cool Saturday morning when I got out of bed, I ask my Little brother Robert where was my notebook and he said I put it on the floor I the turtle got it and I said you better get it and he. said I told you the turtles got it. And then I told my big brother and he said where is Sarah's notebook? The turtle's got it, said my brother. And then he said you better get it or you'll get a whipping. He said, It's on the floor. I said you get it. My sister said, It's not your notebook and I said, my paper and pencil is in it. When my brother got my notebook he started to tear it, and it upset me.

--Sarah Johnson

In December my grandfather passed and I was very upset. Every since my grandfather passed I've been getting lower grades in arithmetic. Last year in Miss Busin's room I was getting E's and G's. But since my grandfather has passed Ive been getting F's and G's. And I was very upset, and I felt dumb. I was cross and terribly uncomfortably. Than I got sick, I was very sick Everything was different in my house, and I felt like I was going to die. The next day my tooth started to hurt. I was terribly uncomfortably. And every since Ive been getting in fights with my sisters and brothers. I still feel the same way--uncomfortable.

--Sandra Keys

Wen I went home to got my. lugh, "my brother hit me, and I tell him to. go and. ploy I. get arring at him and tell my mothe on. and she make him put down him pnne a swine him. and that still dont stop him he still skell us We soid gen we swine him and he "wont skel. agion and. I wind him.

--Velma Madison

[Note: In the above composition, Velma asked several girls to spell words for her. Rather than spell, some girls wrote directly on her paper. This may be the reason why parts of the story are more comprehensible than others. Velma's handwriting is difficult to read and some words are not understandable. These are indicated by blanks in the interpretation that follows. (See previous note about this student on page 121.)

When I went home to get my lunch, my brother hit me, and I told him to go and play. I got angry at him and told my mother on [him]. And she made him put down his _____ a[nd] _____ [at] him. And that still doesn't stop him, he still _____ _____. We said go on. We _____ him and he won't _____ again and I _____ him.]

The first day I heard that my uncle had passed. I began to cry and I said that "oh no it wasn't my uncle," and then I went over to my cousin's house and ask was my uncle dead. Miss Johnson, said yes he was.

I said what day did he die? Miss Johnson said on Sunday morning and Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Collins was so upset to hear about it. So they said that we will have to get some money for some flowers. I asked Miss Johnson, will they have the wake Wednesday March 11, 1965? That afternoon I said Mrs. Osana Nesper may I be excused for the funeral? So Mrs. O. Nesper said yes you can. So I went back to my seat and began to write a song, and this song was all night the angal's watch over me my Lord.

So that night I got dressed for the wake I had a black suit on with a white coat.

The next day I got dress like that one more time so that could go to my uncle's funeral. My father went and washed the car at the station. When he came back, he began to dress. After he dressed, he said "Celestine are you ready to go to the funeral?" So les said I have to get Kay and Anthony ready. When les got them ready les said, lets go.

So - we went around the corner to get a funeral tag.

We went to the funeral and we were the first ones there, all but ten people. When everyone got there, they began to cry as soon as they got into the door. The funeral was so sad I began to cry my self. When the funeral was over, we walked behind the casket and went to the Lincoln Cememtary. It was so very muddy that my shoes were so muddy that I didn't get to see them put him in the ground.

--Larry McDaniel

Wednesday my mother told me that my sister had ate too many of my mother's iron pills. I asked her where was Chaty. She said that Chaty was in the hospital becawse they did not know how many pills my sister took. I was upset because my sister was in the hospital and I didn't have anyone to play with. On Friday, when my sister came home I was happy to see her.

--Cynthia Means

Something terrible happened one nice morning. The hospital had said that our father had died. They couldn't call the whole family so mother told my father's sister and she told almost all the rest of the family. The next day was Easter so we went to funeral and when it was over we went home, and tried to enjoy Easter. So the next day we had to go to school. I was only around five then but as I got bigger I got better grades. I tried getting better grades because I didn't want to hurt mother. It isn't the same around the house, we don't get money every day and I don't get to go and pick up my father any more. There is another thing that is different in the house, it is that everyone is fighting and that is almost every day.

--Gylda Moore

One time I wanted some money from my mother. My mother promised me that she would give me some money if I changed my clothes, and bring her the mail. When I looked into the mail box I saw a letter. It looked like a California stamp to me. I carried the letter to my mother. What kind of stamp was that? She told me she did not know what kind of stamp that was.

--Linda Pickett

When I us to be in Manley School Mr. Bell told me that I had to go to Shepard School. I said "how come?" "because you live at 2853 W. Arthington St. at the right side of the street. And I went to my seat and my friends told me that Shepard School was bad. I was afraid to go to that School. I went at 8:30. to Shepard School and then I saw a boy going into the school and I went behind him. He went in to the Office I went to with my tranfer and I gave it to a lady in the office. She said I was in room 308 at the third floor and a boy in 308 took me outside, and then at 9 o'clock I went to the office and to 308 with the boy. The boys name was Edward West. The teacher in row five at the fourth seat, and she gave me a paper to write spelling.

--Eldwin Santana

One afternoon I did not come home. I ate in the basement store and then when I got to school the teacher hollered at me and then when it was time to go home, she hollered at me again. When we got out I said to Michael, "did you have a good day," Michael said no then. To make matters worst, my brother said I went to Manley. Ricky had a bad day. And when my mother came home I was scared because she usually believes him. because I always get in to trouble. When she called me in to her bedroom, she said, did you go to Manley? I said no but she did not believe me because I usually lie to get out of trouble. Sunday, Ricky told the truth because my mother said, "this is the last time, did todd go to Manley?" No he did not," because he always tells the truth on Sunday. I did not get a whipping that day, and when he said "I'm sorry," I said "you make me sick."

--Ronald Saulter

One summer when my Mother went to Detroit my aunt came to keep us. I wanted to go and play bit I couldn't go, that night I said I am not staying at home to night. She said you is too. The next day she said your Mother is coming home. I was so happy when my Mother came I jumped and ran out side. Can I go out? She said yes.

--Hosea Sims

One day my grandmother got very sick and had to go to Mount Sinai Hosapital. The next day my grandmother had passed away, and my mother, my Aunt Fera and my brother Darryl, came home crying. They told me all that happened. Then I started to cry. My Aunt Elizabeth came home. We told her what had happened and every thing went wrong. I had got lower grades in spelling, arithmetic, and English. We were getting ready for the funeral. Women, men, and children where at our house. My grandmother was at United Chapels. Then she was laid down in Lincold Cemetary.

--Larry Travis

One day when I were going to Lothrop School I thought it was bad but when I tranfered I was mad because I did want to tranfer. So I started to cry so my teacher said if I did want to tranfer I don't have to unless your mother said so. Then I asked my mother do I have to tranfer so she said no, if I do what I am told so she'd let me stay a little longer. Then my mother moved so I had to go. I said good-bye to my teacher and She gave me my Science paper and I left.

--Tommie Lee Watkins

Wednesday when Miss Moran sent for me I wondered "why'd she asked for me." When I was on my way down there I was so scared, but I acted normal. But when I went into the office, Miss Moran said "Lona where is the government form?" I said "at home," Miss Moran said come "over here." She asked me what was my address. I said 2940 W. Fillmore and asked me a great deal of questions and when she asked me did my mother work I said she is a housewife and finally she asked me where did my father work? I said he works at Hines Veterans Hospital of Administration. And Miss Moran said what's your telephone number? and then I really got got scared, and then she said whats your mothers name? I said Loma Deloris Wilson. And your fathers name? Willie Wilson, Miss Moran went over by the window and picked up the phone and my little sister answer it. Miss Moran said, hello Tommie. She thought my sister was a boy. And I really got scared and upset, tears came out of my eyes. When I got home I asked my mother did Miss Moran call? She said yes. I asked her did Rena answer the phone? She said "yes," and I asked her no more.

--Lona Wilson

i

Three weeks ago me and Michale Holifield were fighting. So Miss Moran said that I was a problem child. When we got outside I was fighting everyone that came next to me. My brother Melvin told when we went home. And my Mother said "I anyone hit me, I'd hit them back." When I went back to school Michale was so scared that his leg shook. And when the patrol was dismist Michal tried to make up. So held took hold of my coat. And reach at my hand. Then he smiled at me and made up.

--Samuel Lee Wilson

ii

Last Friday me and Melvin were supposed to go to a club meeting, and this was going to be my frist meeting. So my mother said "When you wash the dishes, sweep the floor then you can go." So when we cleaned up she said "You can't go. When did I say that?" My brother was so mad that he picked up the lamp and threw it down. After a while he was kind to everyone but I was mad for seven hours, I even hit my baby sister. And for punishment I had to go in the kitchen for an hour. After two more hours, I began to grow tired from fighting everybody. But I was very good Saturday evening and I bought my mother a pair of shoes with five dollars from allowance money. I knew her size beacuse she tells us what size she wears. So she said. "Your are a nice son."

--Samuel Lee Wilson

A Teacher's Experience with Composition

UNIT II

Learning to Describe People

Northwestern University
The Curriculum Center in English
1809 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60201

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Contents: Unit II

Acknowledgments ii

Contents iii-iv

Preface 1

Lesson 1 5
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 3-10.]

Lesson 2 12
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 11-15.]

Lesson 3 15
from A Book of Nonsense by Edward Lear 17
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 43-54.]

Lesson 4, Part 1 24
Version 1 (objects removed) 26
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 29-42.]

Lesson 4, Part 2 36
from The Yearling by Marjorie K. Rawlings 38
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 55-72.]

Lesson 5 53
from Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen 54
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 73-84.]

Lesson 6 65
from Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen 66
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 16-28.]

Lesson 7 79
from Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry 83
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 85-99.]

Explanatory Note for Lessons 7-11 98

Lesson 8 99
from Dobry by Monica Shannon 103
[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 100-123.]

A Film: An Experience in Observation 118

Lesson 9 122
  Version 1 (with deletions) 124
  from The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh 123
  [NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 124-138.]

Lesson 10 139
  from Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen 142
  [NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 139-154.]

Lesson 11 153
  from Marya by Marie Halun Block 156
  [NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 155-171.]

Lesson 12 173
  from Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes 176
  [NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 172-184.]

Preface: Unit II

The purpose of Unit II is to encourage awareness of sensory impressions--sight, sound, smell, taste, touch--especially in describing animate things. The repeated emphasis is on sensory details and emotional details in descriptions of people and their actions. The exercises to locate descriptions within the various models focus the pupils' attention on how one person--the author--described such things.

The general procedure was as follows:

1. read the model once
2. discuss the vocabulary
3. examine the selection
4. review the model for understanding of the story
5. discover what details and descriptions were used by the author
6. write compositions

Though the focus of Unit II is composition, many other skills are also taught and needed by the pupils participating in the lessons. Each lesson is an example of communication in its best sense. All four aspects of communication--reading, listening, speaking, and writing--are involved before a lesson is completed. The presentation of the model and vocabulary discussion stimulate the pupils' awareness of language; the closer examination of the model during the period of questions and answers about the content and the descriptions unleashes the pupils' ideas.

The emphasis on vocabulary, which is necessary for the children's understanding of the story, also becomes valuable to them when they are writing their compositions. They find they have ideas they would like to communicate but lack enough words to be as specific as they want to be. Early in the year the children became concerned about the readers of their papers--would the readers understand what they meant. It was during the vocabulary sessions that the children learned to use the dictionary and to put definitions into their own words, as is indicated in the lessons. In the children's papers a reader will notice that a child occasionally may have words spelled phonetically--crōing, stād, gāt. This form of the word was taken by the child from the glossary in his Speller where the words are listed spelled phonetically. One child who did this is Rickey Harris.

The discussion periods are vital, the heart of the writing process. The children have ideas, but they need time to synthesize these ideas. As individuals discuss their particular experiences, others begin to recall their own. Often the words used by one pupil in telling about his experiences, seems to set off some kind of chain reaction among the listeners.

One example occurred when Stanley Brooks related an experience he had had when he tried to surprise his mother (as Marly tried to surprise her family the morning she had trouble lighting the stove in *Miracles on Maple Hill* by Virginia Sorensen). Stanley wanted to clean and dust his mother's dresser and accidentally broke two bottles of lotion. "The sweet perfume from the lotion bottles filled the room," said Stanley. It is interesting to note that Stanley did not write this description in his composition. However, Stanley's account of his experience reminded Sandra Hall of a similar incident. She wrote, "Next I started cleaning off the dresser draw. I took down Lotions, Hair Creams, Shampoos, Perfumes, and a big clock. I smelled the perfume it smelled sweet like roses. And it had a sweet and strong smell. I didn't see but I put it on a nail and it fell and broke." Since Sandra is capable of being original, it seems safe to conclude that Stanley's remark influenced her in this instance.

The discussion time was helpful to others too. The poem by Rickey Harris was his first attempt at writing in class. He had recently transferred to Shepard. Velma Madison, whose handwriting and language skills are minimal, makes noticeable progress in this unit. I feel these results show once again how the use of the model and discussion does release the children for writing by making them aware of the tools at their disposal, the thoughts they have that are worth writing down.

When reading the lessons and the compositions that follow each lesson the reader will be aware that the motivation of any one composition has been a complex and intricate one. I wanted the children to relate to me, but I found that early in the year they were conscious of an "audience": will a person coming in the room understand what I have written? The children wanted to express their ideas and experiences so this "audience" would know what they really meant. Throughout the year, especially in this unit, the pupils did not necessarily react directly to the model of the day. Long term influence from the models prompted compositions many days or weeks after the original lesson. Just how much the children remembered is interestingly revealed by the film experience included following Lesson 8.

Such ideas as form, punctuation, and word choice became areas that one child might help another child with. In the beginning quotation marks might have been copied directly from the model, yet later in the unit several children have learned to correctly punctuate some elaborate conversations. This adds to our persuasion that students do not need an elaborate exercise to teach them such mechanics. Once the pupils understood that this aided the reader, many of them tried to use these mechanical aids correctly, and if they forgot it was usually because they became so engrossed in what they were writing that such obvious secondary considerations were set aside for the more important work at hand. The children's compositions, written after each lesson, appear in chronological order in the Appendix, pages 3-184.

It is hoped that anyone who may wish to teach these lessons will not feel bound to any rigid time schedule. Each class should dictate the speed at which the lessons are taught. Some classes may need a day on each major part. Some may need a couple of days of discussion. But this should be done only if the pupils are interested in detailed discussion of the longer models; otherwise they may talk themselves out and not have anything to write. The later lessons are quite long and involve many difficult concepts which may or may not be emphasized by the teacher--depending on the ability and interest of the class. There is no reason to rush.

One note on two styling devices. In the vocabulary sections, if the definition was given to the students by the teacher, it is underlined. In the discussion sections the capitalized Q. and R. can be interpreted to mean the teacher and the pupil.

Lesson 1

Preliminaries: To provide stimulus or a working basis, I purchased Tootsie Roll Pops (suckers with hard candy coatings and soft fudge or tootsie roll centers) for each child in several flavors--lemon, lime, cherry, orange, chocolate and grape.

Background: In general, the children had been made aware of "colorful descriptions" and "details" in preceding lessons. They enjoyed the difference between "reporting the facts" and "describing the facts with descriptions that colored the facts." One example, used in class, came from a child in response to the following request.

Q. I WOULD LIKE SOMEONE TO TELL ME ABOUT A REAL EXPERIENCE, SOMETHING THAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU, BUT I WANT ONLY THE FACTS, NO DETAILS, JUST THE SKELETON* OF THE STORY.

Linda Booker's story: Mother told Linda to go to the store. Linda went to the store. Linda lost the change. Mother was mad. Mother whipped her.

[NOTE: The following is the same story with details supplied by the pupils. This is the first time the children developed a composition in the third person.]

Mother said, "Please go to the store for me and get some bread and lunch meat." She said, "Be careful, I only have a five dollar bill and that's all the money I have now." Linda promised to be careful with the money, so she took the dirty, folded five dollar bill and stuck it into her little pink purse. The zipper on the purse was broken, so she put the purse into her coat pocket. She entered the store and it was cool and dark. She told the man at the store that she wanted four slices of bologna and a small loaf of bread. She gave the man the money and waited for her change. Sometimes the man would give her the wrong change. Sometimes he would cheat you, but most of the time he didn't count right and you get an extra nickel, dime or quarter. This time, she got the right change and she put it into her purse and ran home. When she got home, there was no money in her purse. Mother got mad. She said, "Go out and find that money and if you don't, I'm going to whip you with the extension cord. Linda went out and lucky for her, she found her money by the downstairs door.

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*We have a cardboard skeleton at the back of the classroom and labels have been attached naming the bones. This was part of our health unit earlier in the year, and it continues to be displayed because the "mystery" of the body continued to interest them. Therefore, when I used the term "skeleton of the story" they knew the phrase was a non-literal expression and that it referred to plain facts.

Procedure: At this time I felt we could now focus our attention on specific details, details of sensory impressions. If this was to be meaningful, the children would have to experiment and discover the senses themselves before they would make an effort to employ them in their compositions. I decided that suckers would adequately motivate the senses of touch, taste, smell, sound, and sight as well as any other device. Besides, they would be economical, readily available at candy counters, and would pose few or no problems in distribution and supervision. I planned to give each child a sucker and to guide the discussion around the impressions the candy made upon their senses. Before I could begin the lesson, several office messengers came in on official business, several quarrels and fist fights that had developed during the noon hour had to be settled immediately and as I began again, the teacher-nurse wanted to speak to the pupils about medical and dental examinations that were to be completed and returned by the end of this school year. By this time, there wasn't a child who did not know what was in that "famous brown bag." I passed the suckers out quickly, asking each child what flavor he preferred. Some of them would have taken any flavor just to get on with the act of eating. (This is clearly visible in the compositions written by Sandra Keys and Gylda Moore.) I decided to give suckers to two of my extremely talkative pupils after all the others had received theirs. I wanted to see if this "mistake" would affect their discussions and compositions. (The two pupils were Linda Booker and Tommy Watkins.) It is interesting to note their written reactions as well as their behavior. Both sat quietly for a long time before they called my attention to the fact, "You missed us Mrs. Nesper. Do you have any more? Any color will be all right."

Discussion

Q. DO YOU LIKE SUCKERS?

R. Yes.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE FLAVOR?

R. Give us whatever you want. (But they were particular about flavor when the same question was asked as I approached each individual.)

Q. IS THERE SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN THE FEEL OF THIS KIND OF CANDY?

R. Yes, it's on a stick and the stick is hard paper or cardboard.

Q. ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT THE WAY IT FEELS?

R. Yes, there is a wax paper wrapper and underneath is a hard piece of candy and inside the candy is a tootsie roll.

Q. WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE SUCKER?

R. Well, it has a white stick, and the wrapper color tells you what flavor is inside--a brown wrapper for chocolate, purple for grape, green for lime, orange for orange, red for cherry, and yellow for lemon.

Q. NOW THAT YOU ALL HAVE SUCKERS AND THE WRAPPERS ARE REMOVED, WHAT ELSE DO YOU FEEL OR SEE?

R. 1) The stick is smooth.

2) The sucker part is sticky and you can see the fudge center if you have a light colored sucker.

3) And the sucker is higher around the middle.

Q. HOW DOES IT SMELL?

R. 1) The suckers smell sweet.

2) Everyone's sucker smells different because they all don't have the same kind. The only ones that smell the same are all the oranges, and all the grapes, and all the chocolates, and all limes and cherries.

Q. HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY SOUNDS THAT WE HAVE MADE IN OPENING AND EATING THE SUCKERS?

R. 1) They make a "plop" sound when you put them on our desks.

2) They sound like a slap if you hit them in your hand.

3) The wax paper wrapper makes noises when you take if off.

4) Your tongue makes noises when it licks and sucks on the candy.

5) The "water" and "spit" in your mouth makes slurpy sounds.

6) Your teeth make noises when you bite into it.

7) Your teeth make a different sound when you bite into the tootsie roll center, too.

8) And your mouth feels funny when you finish eating the sucker. (The

last comment was corrected by fellow pupils--"You said feel, boy, feel is not sounds.)

Q. HOW DOES YOUR SUCKER TASTE? REMEMBER, EVERYONE'S SUCKER WILL NOT TASTE THE SAME BECAUSE ___?___ (because everyone doesn't have the same flavor.)

R. 1) umm, this is good.

2) The lemon is sour, but the tootsie roll is sweet.

3) Boy, this tastes good.

4) Wow! a surprise!

5) Gee, thanks for the treat.

6) I'm eating my candy now, so I can't think about anything now.

7) I just want to sit and finish my treat.

Q. ARE THERE ANY WORDS YOU COULD USE TO DESCRIBE THE SOUNDS MADE AS WE ATE THE SUCKERS?

R. 1) crunch

2) crackled

3) cracked

4) noises made by licking

5) noises made by sucking

6) slurpy sounds made by the water in your mouth

Q. ARE THERE ANY WORDS THAT DESCRIBED THE TASTE OF THESE CANDIES?

R. 1) delicious

2) sweet

3) sour

4) hungry (they make you hungry for more)

Q. ARE THERE ANY WORDS THAT CAN DESCRIBE THE TOUCH OR FEEL OF THE SUCKERS?

R. 1) hard outside

2) soft inside

3) scratched gums from sucking so hard

4) thirsty, you always get very thirsty after eating candy

5) sticky

6) bite

Q. ARE THERE ANY WORDS THAT YOU CAN USE TO DESCRIBE THE SMELL OF SUCKERS?

R. 1) sweet

2) clean

3) sugar

4) tootsie roll or fudge

5) paper-handle and wax-paper wrapper

Q. WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE SIGHT OF THESE SUCKERS?

R. 1) Six different colors for the six different flavors

2) Clean, white, hard sticks for handles

3) Hard candy coating or covering, and tootsie roll soft centers that taste like fudge or chocolate.

(At this moment a youngster called out, "If anyone doesn't want their sucker, I'll finish it for them." Several more joined in and said if there were more suckers they would be very glad to take them and eat them.)

Q. COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE SOUND, SIGHT, SMELL, TASTE, AND TOUCH INVOLVED IN EATING THIS SUCKER?

R. Yes, I suppose so.

Q. LET'S TRY AND WRITE ABOUT ALL THE THINGS WE FELT, TASTED, SAW, SMELLED, AND HEARD DURING THIS PERIOD.

[NOTE: Oral activity is such a pleasurable experience that I felt this would be an unusual and interesting way to introduce lessons in sensory impressions. The compositions that were written after this lesson demonstrated the satisfaction the children received from oral gratification. Several of the students did not write compositions. One pupil said, "Mrs. Nesper, if we don't want to write a composition today, will it be all right?" Of course it was all right, but I wondered--perhaps these pupils were not motivated by this method, perhaps they needed a model and a vocabulary list* duplicated in my handwriting, or perhaps we had too many interruptions before the writing period. We can be sure that the pupils who did not respond during this period did not do so because they lacked the necessary skills; they had contributed many interesting compositions in previous lessons.

[I wanted to investigate this matter further. How important was the model in motivating, recalling and writing an experience? I decided to teach one more lesson in sensory impressions without a model and without the aid of something tangible. The next lesson will emphasize smell, because this would be the quickest and easiest lesson to use with my pupils, since we are surrounded by cooking odors from the boiler room through our ventilator.

[The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 3-10.]

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*I found the children were difficult to reach and motivate, if the duplicated materials were typed. I cut the duplicator masters in long hand and found the children were able to read the selections with greater ease, and as one pupil said, "Say, this is Ma, I mean Mrs. Nesper's handwriting, this is her on paper." This particular method added a human quality to the duplicated materials. The non-verbal communication was--"this isn't going to be too tough, it's in her handwriting and I guess everything is all right if I stick with it. At least I'll see what it is about and it must be important if she wrote it out."

Lesson 2

Procedure: There is a ventilator in Room 308 that captures the cooking odors created by the custodial staff in the boiler room. At various times during the week, we are able to distinguish each dish prepared for their luncheon menu. On this particular afternoon, the room was overcome with strong odors of fried meat, onions, and potatoes. We identified the smells, discovered where they originated, deduced who prepared and ate the food, and considered how the odors affected us as individuals. Some of the children were made uncomfortable by the combined odors; others said, "The smells sure make my mouth water." Still others complained that they wished they could eat in the school building during school hours. "Why can't we eat while we work in school?" "Why do teachers always holler about candy, gum, potato chips and peanuts?"

Discussion

Q. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ODORS IN OUR ROOM?

R. Someone in the basement is frying meat and onions and potatoes.

Q. ARE THEY PLEASANT OR UNPLEASANT SMELLS?

R. 1) I hate the smells; they make me sick to my stomach.

2) I like the way it smells; it makes my mouth water.

Q. DO YOU SEE ANY PICTURES IN YOUR MIND THAT ARE CREATED BY THESE ODORS?

R. 1) Yes, good meat, but I don't like onions. I'd like a sandwich of it now.

2) You're talking about smells; well, I can tell you about what

happened once, but I don't know how to spell a certain word and if I did it wouldn't be nice. Is there another word for, well you know by now what I'm talking about, Mrs. Nesper?

[NOTE: Ronald's comment started a discussion on body wastes, unkept public washrooms, dirty homes, and children "who lose their manners in front of people, that is if they ever had them to begin with." One pupil said, "And you teachers think you're so special; there are a couple teachers in this school that must keep the air-wick and spray people in business. You go into their rooms and they either knock you down with pine tree smells or flower smells."]

Q. WHY DO YOU THINK I BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT ABOUT SMELLS? HOW DO YOU THINK IT TIES IN WITH OUR OTHER WORK IN ENGLISH?

R. 1) Well, it's got to do with details.

2) You probably want us to add the smells of things in our compositions.

Q. WHY WOULD I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE THINGS YOU SMELL?

R. 1) I suppose to color our stories with details.

2) To make our descriptions colorful and interesting.

3) To describe better the things we write about.

Q. AND WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THAT?

R. Because it would be a clearer description and you'd know exactly what was going on.

Q. IS IT IMPORTANT THAT I KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR COMPOSITION?

R. Well, yes, otherwise you wouldn't understand what I wrote,and you might mistake the things I'm saying--this way, with all the colorful details, you'd know just what I wanted to say.

Q. IF YOU BELIEVE THAT WRITING ABOUT SMELLS WILL HELP YOU BETTER DESCRIBE YOUR REACTIONS TO THE SMELLS IN OUR ROOM, OR BETTER DESCRIBE ONE OF YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES, I WANT YOU TO USE IT IN YOUR NEXT COMPOSITION.

[NOTE: As can be seen from the compositions in the Appendix, many of the youngsters failed to write during this period. Again, the cause for the lack of participation is complex: (1) The pupils may have needed the tools they had been introduced to--the presentation of a model, the duplicated vocabulary list to accompany the model, the actual examination of the model, and the discussion period*. (2) The importance of describing odors was doubted by the pupils--can this be something to write about?

[I believe the major problem was that the children's associations with odors were unpleasant ones. The children usually think of body odors when considering odors at all. In the winter months the children bathe once a week, and undergarments are changed infrequently. Older youngsters may sleep with younger children who "wet" the bed more often in the cold months. Food odors are also objectionable because the children have associations to fried foods, the unpleasant odor of burnt grease. The children also seem to dislike many foods in their sometimes poor diet. All of this adds up to odors being an offensive subject, something that should not be discussed. For some children the subject borders on ridicule the same as "signifying" or cursing a peer.

[A definite reaction is noticeable: 22 youngsters out of 33 did not write compositions following this lesson. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 11-15.]

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*During the discussion periods the pupils saw the selection as part of a whole, they began to understand the development of the characters and identified the scene or scenes where we were introduced to the situations facing the characters. We analyzed the descriptive passages for their total effectiveness and finally the sessions closed with our reflections on our own experiences which are similar to those presented by the author. I have found, it is during the discussion periods that the necessity is developed to express thoughts and ideas.

Lesson 3

Preliminaries: I duplicated and distributed the eleven models selected from A Book of Nonsense by Edward Lear. So that the class could hear the rhythm and the rhyme, I read the poems first. The difficult words were defined by the children in response to my questions about each word.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	remarkable	extra special
2.	Buda	a place
3.	ruder	nasty, no manners
4.	silenced	to be quiet
5.	clamour	noise
6.	smashing	breaking, hitting
7.	Dover	a place
8.	rushed	hurried
9.	clover	a green plant
10.	stung	bees sting, they bite
11.	hired	to give someone a job
12.	conduct	the way you act
13.	steady	don't move, don't get excited, don't change
14.	wonderful	fine, couldn't be better
15.	folly	a mistake
16.	induced	made to come
17.	whereupon	so, this happened
18.	melancholy	very sad

19.	immoderate	not moderate, too much, can't stop
20.	swallowing	to swallow, past the mouth down into the stomach
21.	choked	can't breathe or swallow
22.	Bantry	a place
23.	frequently	often
24.	pantry	where food is kept
25.	disturbed	upset
26.	appeased	to please, to satisfy
27.	judicious	wise
28.	Junction	where two streets meet
29.	compunction	regret, to feel sorry
30.	exclaimed	said
31.	forlorn	sad
32.	adorned	covered, decorated
33.	frown	no smile, mean face
34.	Newry	a place
35.	tinctured	colored
36.	fury	angry
37.	Jugs	things to put wine or juice in
38.	distance	how far a thing is

Selection

from A Book of Nonsense
by Edward Lear

There was an Old Man with a nose,
Who said, "If you choose to suppose
    That my nose is too long,
    You are certainly wrong!"
That remarkable Man with a nose.

There was an Old Person of Buda,
Whose conduct grew ruder and ruder,
    Till at last with a hammer
    They silenced his clamour,
By smashing that Person of Buda.

There was an Old Person of Dover,
Who rushed through a field of blue clover;
    But some very large Bees
    Stung his nose and his knees,
So he very soon went back to Dover.

There was a Young Lady whose nose
Was so long that it reached to her toes;
    So she hired an Old Lady,
    Whose conduct was steady
To carry that wonderful nose.

There was an Old Lady whose folly
Induced her to sit in a holly;
    Whereon, by a thorn
    Her dress being torn,
She quickly became melancholy.

There was an Old Man of the South,
Who had an immoderate mouth;
    But in swallowing a dish
    That was quite full of Fish,
He was choked, that Old Man of the South.

There was a Young Person of Bantry,
Who frequently slept in the pantry;
    When disturbed by the mice,
    She appeased them with rice,
That judicious young person of Bantry.

There was an Old Man at a Junction
Whose feelings were wrung with compunction,
When they said, "The Train's gone!"
He exclaimed, "How forlorn!"
But remained on the rails of the Junction.

There was an old person of Down,
Whose face was adorned with a frown;
When he opened the door,
For one minute or more,
He alarmed all the people of Down.

There was an old person of Bow,
Whom nobody happened to know;
So they gave him some soap,
And said coldly, "We hope
You will go back directly to Bow!"

There was an old person of Newry,
Whose manners were tinctured with fury;
He tore all the rugs,
And broke all the jugs,
Within twenty miles' distance of Newry.

Procedure: As I passed along the aisles distributing the stapled materials, I found some of the pupils frowning.

Q. I SUPPOSE YOU ARE WONDERING WHAT THESE SILLY DRAWINGS ARE DOING ON YOUR PAPERS. I WANT YOU TO READ THE TITLE OF THE BOOK.

R. A Book of Nonsense.

Sammy: Boy, you can sure say that, again.

Q. YES, NONSENSE--JUST FOR FUN. I WANT YOU TO READ THESE LITTLE VERSES FOR ENJOYMENT. LET'S JUST SIT BACK AND RELAX AND ENJOY WHAT WE SHALL SEE AND HEAR. (Various pupils volunteered to read the verses aloud, but no one laughed, chuckled, or even smiled.)

Sammy: Well, we are finished with this, whatever it is. What was it anyway? (It seemed that no one thought the verses valuable except "there were a few nice words used here and there.")

Q. SINCE YOU ALL SEEM TO BE CONVINCED THAT I COULD NOT HAVE CHOSEN THESE VERSES FOR THEIR HUMOR, WHY WOULD I WASTE YOUR TIME AND MINE IN HAVING THEM PREPARED? (Without another word the children reread the verses silently. The comments that followed showed they had worked very hard in finding out the "whys" for this lesson.)

R. 1) Well, maybe you chose them because they all have five lines.

2) No, maybe you chose them because of the beautiful words like "silenced," "clamor," and "smashing."

3) Well, sentences one, two and five are all stuck out and sentences three and four are in a little bit. (When this was recognized, page one was reread silently again.)

4) Say, wait a minute, "nose," "suppose," rhyme and "nose" again in the last line, rhymes.

5) Maybe that's why those lines are made to stick out.

6) And maybe the other lines are pushed in because the last words are made to rhyme.

7) You chose these because the words rhyme.

[NOTE: We summarized that these verses had five lines--one, two, and five ended in words that rhymed and lines three and four rhymed. The period ended at this point because we were expected in the assembly hall to view several short films.

[I had suspected the lack of enthusiasm was due to several very important factors, but I wanted the children to verbalize their criticisms. The following day I read the verses to the children.]

Discussion

Q. ALL RIGHT, NOW YOU TELL ME WHY YOU DON'T LIKE THEM.

R. 1) Well, I'd rather have one of the stories you take from books and write a composition, than read this stuff.

2) I don't think its funny; there isn't anything to laugh at here. The person who wrote it should be ashamed of himself.

Q. WHY?

R. Well, everybody knows you shouldn't make fun of people, especially if they have something wrong with them. (Many of the pupils cried out in agreement. The man was "sigging" or "signifying" or "plucked."*) This man is terrible, he signifys and he gets it written in a book. Let me show you, just look--"an Old Man with a nose," "an Old Person of Dover," "a Young Lady whose nose," "Old Lady whose folly," and "Old Man of the South". (They went through each verse to show me that there wasn't "a thing funny in any of them. All he does is make fun of poor folks.")

Q. I THINK YOUR CRITICISM IS A GOOD ONE, BUT REMEMBER THESE ARE NOT REAL PEOPLE. REMEMBER THE TITLE, NONSENSE. CAN'T YOU ENJOY THE WORDS, SOUNDS, RHYMES, THE FACT THAT IT WAS WRITTEN TO ENTERTAIN?

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*"Sigging," "signifying," or "pluck" are used when someone is made an object to scorn or ridicule. It is a painful experience and generally these situations are resolved by fighting. The winner of the fight is said to have "signified out" his accuser or simply is labeled "champion signifier." Stanley Brooks explained it as follows: "Signifying is to talk about someone in a foul way. For example: James may start talking about Frank in a dirty way. Frank may start talking about James in a very foul way. Then later on it ends up in a fight. Another name for signify is Pluck and to say it in a short way, the word is sig. The person who wins is called the champion signifier or is called having signified out the other guy."

R. No!

Q. I'M NOT CONVINCED THAT YOU SEE THESE VERSES AS SIGNIFYING. I'VE HEARD THE SING-SONG THINGS YOU CALL OUT WHEN YOU JUMP ROPE OR PLAY SOME RUNNING GAMES IN THE SCHOOL YARD.

R. Well, that's different, we don't call out, "Old Man, Old Woman."

Q. LET US GIVE THE VERSES A CHANCE, LET'S TRY AND WRITE A FEW THIS AFTERNOON.

[NOTE: This lesson was taught as a diversion which it was hoped would please the children and indirectly encourage interest in vocabulary. After the children were assured that the verses were not meant to be unkind, they agreed to write some. After writing a few lines several children discovered the verses were not simple to write--it was difficult to find words that would match the words in the first two lines.

[The children started out enthusiastically with a line and found they just couldn't find words for the following lines. I suggested that each "author" write his line or lines on the chalk board and enlist the help of the others in the class. They complained their fourth grade dictionaries were inadequate. "How am I supposed to find another word that means the same as bugs, but it's got to rhyme with lice?" They turned to the only other dictionary in the room, Webster's Students Dictionary. When they found that this volume was almost as inadequate as the classroom dictionaries, they asked for permission to use a Webster unabridged dictionary in the library. They worked very hard searching and testing words until they found the right word or words for their verses. At the end of the school day, only a few verses were finished, and all the children agreed they were easier to criticize than to write. Their comments were: 1) We don't know enough words to rhyme with the rest of the lines, 2) Our dictionaries aren't much help, and 3) It isn't easy to remember about the five lines and which lines rhyme with which, and you can trap yourself good if you don't watch out for the words you end the lines with.

[I assured the class that the verses produced that afternoon were fine. I commented how pleased I was that they attacked their problem with such enthusiasm and that they had conducted themselves in such an orderly manner.

[I returned the next afternoon and found dozens of verses on my desk. Some were combined efforts, but many were individually created. Sammy said, "We decided, if you said verses like this were not really signifying we'd write them for you." I asked to have the verses read aloud. While the verses were read, the children began to laugh and nudge one another. "Do you hear that one, Wow!" "That was a very good one, who wrote it?" "I did that one by myself." "I had to help her with that one." (It is interesting to note that many of the verses deal with violence.)

[I found many of the children searching the school library for books containing similar verses. It was interesting to watch pupils like Stanley Brooks, Sammy Wilson, Larry McDaniel, Gylda Moore, Sandra Keys, Sandra Hall, Lona Wilson, Carol Harris, Ronald Saulter, and Michael Covington searching through books and dictionaries for words to complete their particular verses. The heaviest, most unattractive book in the fourth graders' desks has become the most valuable thing they possess.

[Since the children wrote verses in abundance once their initial distaste was uncovered and explained, it is possible that they have learned to understand another kind of humor than that they readily understood before the lesson. A side result may be that this lesson prepared the way for the children's acceptance of a later unit on poems. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 43-54.]

Lesson 4

Part 1

Preliminaries: I duplicated the difficult vocabulary and Version 1 (with objects removed) of The Yearling by Marjorie K. Rawlings. The vocabulary was distributed first, then Version 1. Since the full version would have been too much for the class to comprehend at this time, I decided to present something a little different. In order to make the children aware of the things or objects described in this selection, I decided to remove the objects, careful of course, to remove only those objects that would be easily recognized from the descriptions.

Vocabulary

Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1. column	a straight line, a pillar to support a roof
2. rose	to get up, flower (two definitions "just in case" the story didn't use "to get up" it'll be the flower)
3. straight	no turns, no bends, no curves, a line
4. cabin	a house
5. clay	dirt and water
6. trailed	followed
7. speculating	thinking and watching
8. hearth	fireplace
9. ti-ti	a tree found in the southern part of our country; it has shiny leaves
10. scrub	to clean, to rub, to wash

11.	scrub	small trees and bushes growing in poor soil, hard to pass through
12.	corn shucks scrub	the outer covering of corn; husk--but the small ones
13.	balancing	not tipping over or falling
14.	shafts	stems
15.	chinaberry	tree
16.	burrowed	dig into, bury
17.	fragile	breakable
18.	Glen	narrow valley between hills or mountains
19.	clusters	groups
20.	lavender	purplish color
21.	greedily	stingy, doesn't think of others
22.	jessamine	flowers
23.	magnolias	flowers
24.	swift	fast
25.	flight	to fly
26.	amber	yellowish-brown color
27.	nobler	better than something else, more honorable

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are going to read about a boy a little older than yourselves and his name is Jody. He lived on a farm in Florida. You will be able to tell how long ago this story took place, after you read the first few pages. He has a father and mother, but no sisters and brothers. He has some very real problems, and it would be interesting to find out whether we have faced similar problems.

Version 1: (objects removed)

A passage from The Yearling by Marjorie K. Rawlings, beginning "A column of smoke rose thin and straight . . ." and ending ". . .and the corn could wait another day," was printed with all objects removed.

(source for this model is cited on p. 38 of this lesson)

Procedure: After we had discussed the vocabulary, I distributed the selection with the objects removed. As I distributed the two duplicated sheets (unstapled so that references could be made quickly) I saw puzzled looks cross the children's faces. I overheard one of the youngsters say, "There must be another sheet to this lesson." Another replied, "Maybe she'll write a list of words on the board that will fit in these blanks." From across the room I heard, "She must have flipped her wig, blanks with no words?" With this the class broke out buzzing, "What's this going to be?" Larry Travis asked, "Okay teacher, what's going on here? You have blanks and no words to put in these blanks. How are we supposed to do this lesson? We don't know what's missing."

Q. LARRY, YOU ARE RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, I HAVEN'T ANY WORDS LISTED FOR YOU TO USE. WE ARE GOING TO FILL IN THE MISSING WORDS BY READING THE MODEL CAREFULLY, VERY CAREFULLY. THE DESCRIPTIONS IN EACH SENTENCE SHOULD GIVE US ENOUGH HINTS SO THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO PUT IN THE MISSING WORD.

Sammy: Yes, but how do we know our word is the same word as the author's?

Q. THAT'S A GOOD CRITICISM, SAMMY, BUT WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT THE DESCRIPTIONS?

Sammy: You said we would know them by the things that were said in the sentences.

Q. YES, I BELIEVE THAT THE WORDS THE AUTHOR HAS USED IN THE DESCRIPTIONS WILL IDENTIFY THE OBJECTS OR THINGS SHE TALKED ABOUT. THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF HINTS IN EACH SENTENCE, JUST LOOK AND LISTEN FOR THEM.

Sammy: Will you help us if we don't know?

Q. YES, I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE HELP YOU NEED. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST, IF I READ THE SELECTION FIRST. (This is unusual because the children do all the reading of the models--at least since early in Unit I.) EACH TIME I COME TO A BLANK, I'LL SAY "BLANK" JUST TO CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THE MISSING WORD OR WORDS.

Sammy: I'll read, first, teacher. I can do it like you, too.

Q. ALL RIGHT, SAMMY, GO ON. (At the end of the first sentence he decided, "You better read this now, I can understand it, but maybe the others wouldn't know anything." I read the selection slowly and when I finished, hands went up immediately. "I think I know this one here." "Well, I know the first, for sure." "Say, I'm sure this one here is, 'fire.'")

Q. NOW, LET US TURN BACK TO OUR FIRST PAGE. WHO WOULD LIKE TO START US OFF? WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE THE SECRETARY? (When these were settled, Tommy began.)

Tommy: "A column of smoke rose thin and straight from the cabin chimney."

Gylda: "The smoke was blue where it left the red of the clay." ("Red of clay" confused them until Tommy said, "Boy, this is country talk. The smoke came out of a red chimney made of red clay.")

Sammy: "Smoke trailed into the blue of the April sky and was no longer blue but gray."

Stanley: Why do you want to use smoke again? I thought it was It.

[NOTE: At various times the children have shown concern about the number of times a word may be used in a composition. "A substitute word" as they call it would make the story more interesting. Sentences that start with I did . . . I did . . . I went . . . I said . . . I am . . . are too much the same--"babies write that way." To settle Stanley's question I read the sentences with the supplied answers and used smoke. I repeated the section and used It, for the last blank. The pupils decided It sounded better because the word smoke had been used twice in the preceding sentence.]

Sandra Keys: "The _______ Jody watched it, speculating."

Q. LET'S LOOK AT THE SENTENCE FOR SOME HINTS. THE _______ JODY. WHAT IS JODY?

R. A boy

Q. WELL THEN, READ IT AGAIN AND USE THE WORD BOY.

Sandra: "The boy Jody watched it, speculating."

Lona: "The _______ on the kitchen hearth was dying down."

Q. WHAT COULD BE DYING DOWN ON THE HEARTH?

Lona: Oh! Fire.

Stanley: "His mother was hanging up _______ and _______ after the noon meal."

Q. STANLEY, WHAT WOULD MOTHER HANG UP AFTER ANY MEAL?

Stanley: Oh, pots and pans.

Q. YES, NOW WHAT'S ANOTHER NAME FOR MEAL?

R. Supper

Q. SUPPER AT NOON?

R. Oh, sorry, lunch.

Q. READ IT AGAIN AND USE LUNCH.

R. That doesn't sound good.

Q. WHAT'S ANOTHER WORD FOR LUNCH?

R. Oh, a funny word--dinner.

Ronald: "The day was Friday."

Larry: "_______ would sweep the floor with a _______ of ti-ti and after that, if _______ were lucky _______ would scrub it with the corn shucks scrub."

Q. WHO WOULD SWEEP THE FLOOR?

R. Mother.

Q. MOTHER WOULD SWEEP THE FLOOR WITH ___?___ WHAT DO YOU SWEEP A FLOOR WITH?

R. Broom.

Q. WHO WOULD BE LUCKY, MOTHER OR JODY?

R. Jody, of course, he doesn't have to do it.

Q. WHAT WORD COULD WE USE INSTEAD OF JODY?

R. He.

Q. WHO IS GOING TO SCRUB?

R. Mother.

Q. AND WHAT WORD COULD WE SUBSTITUTE FOR MOTHER?

[NOTE: At this point the sentences were reread with the blanks filled in. With all the discussion we needed to stop and see the work as a whole, complete, to this point.]

A column of smoke rose thin and straight from the cabin chimney. The smoke was blue where it left the red of the clay. It trailed into the blue of the April sky and was no longer blue but gray. The boy Jody watched it, speculating. The fire on the kitchen hearth was dying down. His mother was hanging up pots and pans after the noon dinner. The day was Friday. Mother would sweep the floor with a broom of ti-ti and after that, if he were lucky, she would scrub it with the corn shucks scrub.

Larry: "If she scrubbed the floor she would not miss him until he reached the Glen."

Sarah: "He stood for a minute balancing the hoe on his shoulder."

(There was no hesitation on the part of these pupils in supplying the above answers.)

Sandra: "The ________ itself was pleasant if the unweeded rows of young shafts of ________ were not before him."

Q. HAVE YOU HEARD THE TERM "SHAFTS" BEFORE?

R. Yes, in the vocabulary. ("The children looked back and called out "stem.")

Q. "UNWEEDED ROWS," WHAT DOES THAT TELL US?

R. Something is growing in rows, and the weeds are growing too.

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK GROWS IN ROWS AND HAS SHAFTS OR STEMS SHOWING?

R. Corn does.

Q. DOES THIS GO ALONG WITH THE DEFINITION THAT WAS GIVEN FOR SHAFTS?

R. 1) Yes, it means the corn was just coming up.

2) Say, it says "young" here, so it is corn.

Q. CORN IS CORRECT. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER BLANK IN THE SENTENCE? "THE _______ ITSELF WAS PLEASANT"?

R. The field where it's growing is pleasant.

Q. WHAT DOES A FIELD LOOK LIKE?

R. Well, it's out in the open. I mean there are no trees or things around. It's clear of things.

Stanley: "The clearing itself was pleasant"

Q. FINE, VERY GOOD.

Carol: "The _______ _______ had found the chinaberry tree by the front gate." Is it birds, Mrs. Nesper?

Q. CAROL, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD READ THE NEXT SENTENCE AND THEN I THINK YOU WILL SEE WHAT'S NEEDED HERE.

Carol: "_______ burrowed into the fragile clusters of lavender bloom as greedily as though there were no other _______ in the scrub; *as though _______ had forgotten . . . ."*

Sammy: Wait a minute, I know that word, it's got to be they--"they had forgotten."

Carol: ". . .they had forgotten the yellow jessamine of March; the sweet bay and the magnolias ahead of them in May."

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK BURROWS INTO FRAGILE BLOOMS? WHAT MIGHT BE GREEDY FOR FLOWERS?

R. Bees

Linda: "The bees _______ had found . . ."

Sammy: What's the second blank for, Mrs. Nesper?

Q. WHAT KIND OF BEES ARE THERE, SAMMY?

Sammy: Workers, drones, queens

Tommy: Say, I once knew a man who had bees in his back yard--they would climb on his arms and everything--like pets.

Q. COULD YOU COMPARE THE MAN'S BEES WITH THE BEES JODY TALKED ABOUT?

Tommy: The man gave them a place to stay and he used to sell the honey they made. The ones in the story probably do for themselves.

Q. WHAT WOULD YOU CALL BEES THAT "DO FOR THEMSELVES?"

R. Wild.

Q. GOOD, NOW READ THE SENTENCE, LINDA.

Linda; "The wild bees had found the chinaberry tree by the front gate. They burrowed into the fragile clusters of lavender bloom as greedily as though there were no other blooms in the scrub;"

Q. WHAT IS ANOTHER WORD FOR BLOOM?

Linda: Flowers--"flowers in the scrub"

Sammy: ". . . as though they had forgotten the yellow jessamine of March;"

Harriet: "It occurred to him that he might follow the swift column of flight of the black and gold bees and so find _______-_______ full of amber honey.

Q. WHAT DOES COLUMN MEAN HARRIET?

Harriet: A straight line, like a column of twos when we line up.

Q. LET'S USE LINE INSTEAD OF COLUMN, "SWIFT LINE OF FLIGHT." WHAT IS BLACK AND GOLD?

R. Bees

Q. WHAT PART OF THE BEE IS BLACK AND GOLD

R. Their bodies.

Q. WHAT WAS JODY GOING TO TRY AND FIND?

R. Honey.

Q. WHERE WOULD HE FIND THE BEES' HONEY?

R. Where they live.

Q. WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY LIVE?

R. Trees.

Q. AND IF THE TREE IS USED AS A HOME FOR BEES, THE TREE IS NOW __?___

R. A bee-tree.

Q. NOW LET'S READ THIS PAGE WITH ALL THE ANSWERS, UP TO THIS POINT.

(After this rereading, Michael continued.)

Michael: "The________cane syrup was gone and most of the jellies. Finding a bee-tree was nobler ________ than hoeing, and the corn could wait another day."

Q. *WE KNOW JODY LIVED ON A FARM AND WHAT DO FARMERS DO AT HARVEST TIME* FOR THEIR OWN USE IN WINTER?

Tommy: They put up food in jars--that's canning food.

Q. AND WHEN DO THEY USE THIS CANNED FOOD?

R. In winter. "The winter cane syrup was gone . . ."

Q. AND IF YOU GO OUT AND SEARCH FOR SOMETHING, YOU CALL THIS __?___

R. Work. "Finding a bee-tree was nobler work . . ."

[NOTE: The entire selection was reread as completed by the children. The class was impressed with their own discoveries and as Tommy said, "This was pretty good, Mrs. Nesper. We found these words all by ourselves." After reading the selection, we had a discussion.]

Discussion

Q. WHAT SEEMS TO BE GOING ON IN THIS STORY?

R. Well, the story is about a boy called Jody.

Q. IF THE STORY IS ABOUT A BOY CALLED JODY, THEN WHAT WORD COULD WE USE AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR "BOY" AND JODY"?

Sammy: I got it--hero! I read it once someplace.

Q. WHAT IS OUR HERO LIKE?

R. Well, he seems to be day dreaming ahd he wants to leave his work out in the field.

Q. WHY DOES HE SAY THAT FINDING A BEE-TREE IS NOBLER THAN HOEING IN A FIELD OF CORN?

R. Because anyone can hoe but anyone can't find a bee-tree.

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK HIS MOTHER WOULD DO IF SHE FOUND THAT HE HAD LEFT HIS JOB?

R. 1) She would have a fit.

2) He would get a beating, but good.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU FOUND OUT ABOUT THE PEOPLE IN THIS STORY?

R. 1) They work hard.

2) Everyone has a job to do.

3) His mother canned food.

4) Father is off somewhere

5) Jody was looking for trouble.

6) I don't think they have too much money if he got so worried about syrup and jellies and honey.

7) And that broom sounds homemade to me.

8) And they were so poor they didn't have mops or even brushes to scrub with; she was going to use corn shucks.

9) They must have been far from school because he says it's April, and he was out hoeing--that's real country folks.

Q. WHEN DID THIS STORY TAKE PLACE--LAST YEAR, 10 YEARS AGO, ABOUT WHEN? REMEMBER YOUR TALK ABOUT SCHOOLS AND THEIR FOOD SUPPLY AND THE THINGS THEY WORKED WITH, THIS MAY HELP YOU PLACE THE GENERAL TIME THIS STORY TOOK PLACE.

R. From the things they said in the story, it sounds like the early times.

The Writing Experience

Q. WHAT IS JODY DOING THROUGH MOST OF THIS STORY?

R. Daydreaming.

Q. DAYDREAMS ARE SOMETHING ALL OF US HAVE DONE--RIGHT HERE IN CLASS BY THE WAY. IS THAT RIGHT VANESSA? (Vanessa had been daydreaming.)

Vanessa: Huh? What did you say?

Sammy: You see that, she is so stupid; she is doing it now and doesn't know it.

Q. CAN YOU REMEMBER A TIME WHEN YOU HAD A SPECIAL THING TO DO AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL, AND YOU WASTED TIME DAYDREAMING AND BEFORE YOU KNEW IT, MOTHER OR TEACHER WAS AT YOUR ELBOW ASKING ALL SORTS OF QUESTIONS? PERHAPS YOU HAD A JOB TO DO, SOMETHING YOU THOUGHT YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE TO DO, SO YOU WASTED TIME UNTIL MOTHER OR SOMEONE GOT AFTER YOU?

[NOTE: The children discussed times when they were preoccupied with dreams and failed to perform tasks adults had set upon them. After the discussion period they wrote compositions. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 29-42.]

Lesson 4

Part 2

Preliminaries: I duplicated the difficult vocabulary and the full version of The Yearling by Marjorie K. Rawlings. The vocabulary and full version were distributed. Then the vocabulary was discussed, with the children supplying the definitions.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	stirring	noises, moving
2.	bored	made a hole, to bother
3.	branch	part of a tree that comes from the trunk; part of a river that goes off into another direction; part of anything that leaves the main body
4.	split-rail fence	a particular kind of fence made of split logs
5.	Old Julia the hound	name of a dog
6.	Grahamsville	the town
7.	Rip	name of the bull dog
8.	Perk	name of a dog
9.	feist	small dog
10.	form	body, shadow, shape
11.	mongrel	mutt, mixed blood, some bulldog and German shepherd and things like that
12.	shrill	squeaky, high, not pleasant to hear
13.	deprecatory	disapproving, expressed disapproval
14.	recognized	to know

15.	indifferently	did not care
16.	chase, catch, kill	the hunt, and the killing of an animal
17.	scraps	left overs
18.	gentle	kind , good
19.	humans	people
20.	worn-toothed devotion	love by an animal
21.	Penny Baxter	father's name
22.	Hounds	dogs
23.	black-jack	an oak tree found in Eastern United States having black bark, and they often form thickets
24.	dense	thick growth of short plants, close together
25.	curly haired	waves, not straight
26.	plumed tail	full, bushy tail
27.	ache	pain
28.	big pines	large Christmas trees, (I added evergreens)
29.	scrub	a piece of poor land where trees and bushes or small plants grow
30.	kindling	fire wood
31.	incline	starts going up
32.	framed	bordered, around like a frame on a picture
33.	tawny	sand color, yellowish
34.	homespun	homemade--even the weaving
35.	indigo	a blue dye made from plants
36.	stationary	stand still
37.	bolls of cotton	piles or strips of cotton
38.	drizzly rain	not much rain
39.	corn-crib	place where corn is kept

38-39-40

"A column of smoke rose thin and straight..." to "'...a little old drizzly rain before night fall,' he thought."

The complete model will be found on pp. 1-3 of The Yearling by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938).

Selection

Introductory remarks: We are going to meet our friend Jody again, and this time we are going to read the full version of the model--just as it appears in the book The Yearling by Marjorie K. Rawlings.

Discussion

Q. DID YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT FATHER SAID?

R. Yes.

Q. WHY DO YOU THINK THE AUTHOR WROTE IT JUST THIS WAY?

R. Because that is the way country folks talk.

Q. AND WOULD THIS BE TRUE FOR JODY'S SPEECH?

R. Yes.

Q. WOULD YOU SPELL LITTLE--"LEETLE"?

R. No.

Q. WHY DID THE AUTHOR SPELL IT THAT WAY?

R. To make us know father didn't say little, he said lee-tle.

Q. WHAT DOES "YOU WAS PUPS TOGETHER" MEAN?

R. You were babies together.

Q. AND "TEN YEAR GONE, WHEN YOU WAS TWO YEAR OLD AND HER A BABY"?

R. Ten years ago when you were two years old and she was a baby puppy.

Q. WHAT DOES "YOU HURTED THE LEETLE THING, NOT MEANIN' NO HARM. SHE CAIN'T BRING HERSELF TO TRUST YOU. HOUNDS IS OFTEN THAT-A-WAY"?

R. You hurt the little thing, but you didn't mean to harm her. She can't bring herself to trust you. Hounds are like that.

Q. WHAT IMPRESSIONS DO YOU HAVE OF THE BOY, JODY, MOTHER, AND FATHER?

R. 1) Jody sounds like a very lonely boy--even the dogs don't seem to like him.

2) Yes, he is lonely because it says he wished he had a dog like Grandma Hutto's.

3) Mother must be a very busy person.

4) They sound poor, real poor because they dye their own clothes.

5) And they canned everything--even the syrup.

6) And they said his shirt was "homespun" so that means they were real country folks.

7) Father went to town and his dog followed him so he must be pretty good.

8) Jody daydreams alot, and it looks like he is going to get into trouble.

9) Well, that word "deprecatory" says even the dogs disapproved of him.

10) Yes, and it says they looked at him indifferently, so I guess Park and Rip don't like Jody.

11) It looks like schools must not have been close by because they don't say anything about him going to school.

12) Maybe if he went to school he might have a friend to play with.

Q. TOMORROW, WE WILL BEGIN TO LOOK CLOSELY INTO THE AUTHOR'S DESCRIPTIONS. WE MAY BE ABLE TO FIND THAT SOME OF OUR IDEAS ARE ACCURATE, MAYBE THEY ARE WRONG, AND MAYBE WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THINGS WE COULD NOT SEE TODAY. (The duplicated copies were collected and returned the next day.)

[NOTE: The selection was read orally by the pupils to refresh their memories. Any duplication found in this lesson was deliberate on my part and was included for greater emphasis.]

Q. I THINK IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW THE AUTHOR DESCRIBED VARIOUS THINGS. FOR EXAMPLE, HOW WAS SMOKE DESCRIBED? (The children searched through the duplicated pages and listed words and phrases that qualified smoke. Their responses were placed on the chalkboard by a secretary. The procedure was repeated for the following things as well.)

Objects	Descriptions
smoke	column--rose thin, straight
	blue where it left the red of the clay
	trailed into the blue of the April sky
	no longer blue but gray
Jody	watched, speculating
	if he were lucky, would not miss him until he reached the Glen
	stood a minute, balancing the hoe on his shoulder
	occurred . . . to follow
	must be gone across the clearing
	walked down the cornfield until he was out of sight of the cabin
	swung himself over the fence on his two hands
	sent (dogs) back to the yard "They were a sorry pair, . . . good for nothing but the chase, the catch and the kill."
	tried to make up to Julia but she would have none of him
fire	on the kitchen hearth was dying down
Mother	hanging up pots and pans
	sweep
	scrub
clearing	pleasant
corn	unweeded rows
	young shafts of corn

bees	wild
	found a chinaberry tree
	burrowed
	greedily
	they had forgotten
	swift line of flight of the black and gold bodies
	bored
bloom	fragile clusters of lavender
	yellow Jessamine of March
	sweet bay . . . magnolias ahead of them in May
honey	amber
bee-tree	finding . . . was nobler work than hoeing
afternoon	alive with soft stirring
dogs	Old Julia, hound followed father gentle thing worn-toothed devotion only for father
	Rip and Perk, both saw him clear the fence and ran toward him wagged "deprecatory" tails and watched indifferently no interest in him except when he brought . . . plates of table scraps
	Rip, bull dog barked deeply
	Perk, new feist, small mongrel high and shrill bark

[NOTE: The children copied these notes on the back of their duplicated copies because it has proven to be the surest, safest way to preserve these materials. The copies were collected and distributed the following day. After the models were distributed, we reviewed the story up to father's speech. At this point the material was reread aloud.]

Q. WAS THERE A REASON FOR ME TO ADD A PICTURE OF FATHER AND JODY NEAR THE THINGS THEY SAID?

R. 1) Yes, I guess so.

2) Sure, you wanted to show us what they looked like.

3) You wanted us to see they were country folks.

4) And they talked like country people.

Q. DO YOU THINK THE AUTHOR IS A POOR SPELLER? FOR EXAMPLE, LOOK AT "LEETLE" FOR "LITTLE," "MEANIN'" FOR "MEANING" AND "CAIN'T" FOR "CAN'T" OR "CANNOT."

R. 1) No, she just wanted us to know how they said things.

2) They say things different than us.

Q. IS IT NECESSARY FOR US TO KNOW THE WAY THEY SPOKE?

R. Yes, it is because they are different from other people.

Q. IF THESE PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT DOES THAT MEAN THEY ARE GOOD OR BAD OR DOES IT MEAN SOMETHING ELSE?

R. 1) That doesn't mean good or bad--they are just different. I don't know how to explain it.

2) They have different ways, that's all.

Q. WHAT YOU REALLY MEAN TO SAY IS--ALL PEOPLE ARE THE SAME, MAYBE THEIR WAYS OF LIVING AND SPEECH ARE DIFFERENT, BUT WE ALL HAVE ONE VERY IMPORTANT THING IN COMMON--WE ARE PEOPLE, HUMAN BEINGS. AND WHAT DO ALL HUMAN BEINGS NEED?

R. Air, food, water, clothing, shelter.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE HUMANS NEED?

R. Warm houses in winter.

Q. "HE WISHED HE HAD A DOG . . . THAT LICKED HIS FACE AND FOLLOWED HIM AS OLD JULIA FOLLOWED HIS FATHER." WHAT IS OUTSTANDING IN THIS PASSAGE?

R. 1) Jody is a very lonely boy.

2) He wishes he had something to love and follow him.

3) Maybe his parents don't love him.

4) Maybe they love him and don't tell him.

5) All he wants is something of his very own to love.

Q. IS THAT IMPORTANT--TO LOVE SOMETHING OF YOUR OWN?

R. 1) Yes it is--it's yours, nobody else's, all yours.

2) You need it, and it must need you.

Q. YOU HAVE JUST SAID IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOVE AND BE NEEDED, BUT WHEN I ASKED WHAT DO HUMAN BEINGS NEED, YOU DID NOT SAY LOVE.

R. 1) Oh, love is needed just like food or water or air or any of those other things we just said.

2) You know I never did think about it, but I guess we do need to feel like someone loves us.

3) Sometimes I don't feel like my family loves me, but my dog always loves me. He wags his tail when I come home from school and he licks my face with his wet tongue.

4) Yes, my dog always loves me too because he jumps in my bed and sleeps with me sometimes.

Q. WHY WAS GRANDMA HUTTO'S DOG SO WONDERFUL?

R. 1) Because it did tricks.

2) Not so much that, it could laugh when grandma laughed, and it would jump on her lap and lick her face.

3) That's because it loved her like she loved him.

Q. YOU HAVE OFTEN SAID JODY WAS LONELY, AND THAT HE WAS PROBABLY POOR--IS THERE ANYTHING IN THIS PASSAGE THAT MIGHT PROVE THOSE IDEAS?

R. Yes--"He would like anything that was his own; that licked his face and followed him as old Julia followed his father."

Q. FINE. WHAT WAS JODY?

R. He was a farm boy.

Q. WHAT WOULD HE GROW UP TO BE?

R. Probably a farmer like his father.

Q. WOULD HE GROW UP TO BE A MAN LIKE HIS FATHER?

R. Yes, if he thought his father was good.

Q. AND RIGHT NOW, AT THIS VERY MOMENT IN THE STORY HE SAYS THAT HE WANTS SOMETHING LIKE HIS FATHER'S. WHAT IS IT?

R. Well he wants a dog that will follow him like Old Julia follows his father.

Q. YES, THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS AND IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE IN THAT PASSAGE THAT MIGHT TELL US ABOUT JODY'S FEELINGS FOR HIS FATHER?

R. 1) Well if he wants something like his father, he must think his father is a pretty good guy.

2) Yes, that's got to be it, otherwise it wouldn't tell us about Julia and father; they would just tell us about Grandma Hutto's dog.

3) Well, I think Jody must love his father and want to be like his father and his father has a dog that loves him so Jody wants one too.

Q. HOW DID WE GET ALL THIS INFORMATION FROM THOSE FEW LINES?

R. Because it says so.

Q. DOES IT REALLY SAY ALL THAT?

R. Yes it does.

Q. READ IT ALOUD AND LET'S SEE.

R. 1) It says all these things in a little different way.

2) It's the words that are in the sentences that make the difference.

3) It's the words the author used.

4) And it's the way the words were put together.

Q. GOOD, VERY GOOD. WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM THIS PASSAGE TO MAKE OUR OWN COMPOSITIONS MORE INTERESTING.

R. It's the words we use and the way we put them together that makes a story interesting.

[NOTE: At this point in our discussion the final section of the model, beginning with the sentence "He cut into the sand road and began to run east," was reread to refresh our memories.]

Q. WHY DID JODY THINK HE COULD RUN FOREVER?

R. Because he was doing something he wanted to do.

Q. IF I ASKED YOU TO DO FIFTY PROBLEMS IN ARITHMETIC, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOU AFTER TEN PROBLEMS WERE COMPLETED?

R. 1) My fingers would hurt.

2) I would run out of paper.

3) My head would hurt.

4) My pencil would break.

5) I'd forget to do them all.

Q. BUT IF I SAID NO HOMEWORK TONIGHT, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

R. 1) I'd feel good.

2) I'd go out and play until dark.

Q. WHY DOES JODY FEEL LIKE "HE COULD RUN FOREVER" AND NOT HAVE HIS LEGS ACHE?

R. Because he ran away from hoeing, and he is doing what he wanted to do.

Q. "HE SLOWED DOWN TO MAKE THE ROAD LAST LONGER." WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

R. He liked what he was doing.

Q. WHY WOULD WE WANT TO MAKE THINGS LAST LONGER?

R. When we really like them we want them to last longer.

Q. LIKE WHAT?

R. Candy, ice cream, soda, a bicycle ride, opening presents, things like that.

Q. READ THE REST OF THIS SELECTION SILENTLY. (From "He had passed" to "he thought.") WHAT IS THE REST OF THIS SELECTION CONCERNED WITH?

R. It talks about the things that Jody sees as he runs.

Q. WHAT DOES HE SEE?

R. He passes big pines and sand pines.

Q. HOW ARE THE SAND PINES DESCRIBED?

R. So thin they would make good kindling wood.

Q. AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

R. The road goes up, and he stops at the top. Then he tells what he sees.

Q. WHAT DOES HE SEE?

R. 1) The sky and his shirt are the same blue.

2) And the sand is tawny colored.

3) And he sees pine trees, too.

4) The clouds are like the "bolls of cotton" that don't move.

5) Then it gets dark for a minute so he thinks it's going to rain a little.

Q. WHAT DOES THIS DESCRIPTION DO FOR THE STORY?

R. 1) It tells you what he saw.

2) Blue and tawny tells you the colors that he saw.

Stanley: And I think it does something else, it says he took time out from finding his bee-tree full of honey to look at the things in front of him.

Q. WELL DONE. THIS IS A VERY LONG MODEL, AND I THINK YOU ALL HAVE DONE REMARKABLY WELL, AND I'M PROUD OF YOU. (Our time was up for the day. The writing period would follow on the next day.)

The Writing Experience

The children skimmed the selection again to refresh their memories.

Q. WHAT DID YOU THINK WERE THE MOST OUTSTANDING THINGS DESCRIBED IN THE YEARLING.

R. 1) I think the thing that is important is that Jody was lonely.

2) I think Jody needed someone to love.

3) I think Jody wanted his parents to love him.

4) I think Jody wanted to grow up like his father; he wanted a dog that would love him.

Q. IS THERE SOMETHING THAT IS THE SAME IN ALL THESE THINGS YOU HAVE SAID?

R. (They thought for a moment.) Yes, Love.

Q. YES, LOVE. LOVE IS A VERY IMPORTANT FACTOR AS IMPORTANT AS ___?___ (air, food, shelter, water) LET US LOOK AT LOVE. CAN YOU SEE IT?

R. No

Q. CAN YOU SMELL IT?

R. No

Q. CAN YOU HEAR IT?

R. No

Q. CAN YOU TASTE IT?

R. No

Q. CAN YOU TOUCH IT?

R. No

Q. WELL THEN, HOW CAN YOU DESCRIBE LOVE?

R. You feel it.

Q. YOU HAVE SAID JODY WAS A LONELY BOY. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE LONELY? BY SOUND?

R. No

Q. BY SIGHT?

R. No

Q. BY SMELL?

R. No

Q. BY TASTE?

R. No

Q. BY TOUCH?

R. No

Q. WELL, HOW CAN THE SENSE OF LONELINESS AND LOVE BE DESCRIBED?

R. 1) You feel these inside.

   2) You're lonely inside, and you feel love inside. (As they said "inside" they placed their hands on their hearts.)

   3) And if they are the things inside you, you can only describe the way you feel by telling it.

   4) Yes, by finding the right words and putting them in the right order.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER DOUBTED THE LOVE OF YOUR PARENTS FOR YOU?

R. Yes

Q. WHEN?

R. 1) Oh, when we had a new baby at our house.

   2) When I got mad at them.

   3) When I was punished.

Q. DO YOU THINK YOU COULD WRITE ABOUT ONE OF YOUR EXPERIENCES?

R. Could I write about the time my mother had a new baby, and she thought that baby was so special and then the baby grew up and was treated just like the rest of us?

[NOTE: The children talked about other such situations. They used the remainder of the period to write their compositions. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 55-72.]

Lesson 5

Preliminaries: I duplicated the selection about an ice storm from Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen, and the difficult vocabulary. I distributed and discussed the difficult vocabulary, with the children supplying the definitions, and then passed out the selection.

Vocabulary

Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1. miracle	something unusual, wonderful
2. crystals	clear, ice that you can see through or anything that you can see through
3. frosty	frozen, cold
4. million	many, lots, (The class became very mathematical and said--ten tens are a hundred; ten hundreds equal one thousand; ten, one thousands equal ten thousands; ten, ten thousands equal one hundred thousand; and ten, one hundred thousands equal a million. "Well," said one pupil, "that's what I already said--lots.")
5. twig	smallest part of a branch
6. wilderness	wild, place, no one lives there, animals and forest
7. threads	thinnest part of something material, like the threads that hold your clothes together
8. spun	to spin, turn, draw out and twist out into shape
9. hot pad	electric pad for heat, or hot water bottle--made of rubber, pad for heat
10. budge	move
11. boughs	main, or largest branches of a tree

12.	distance	how far something is
13.	disgusted	not happy, disappointed
14.	motions	to move part of your body
15.	secret	private, no one knows about it
16.	adventure	go out to find something by yourself
17.	disappeared	gone, not seen, stolen
18.	chattering	noise made by teeth when you are cold
19.	slipped	to move along
20.	blast	noise not expected, sudden rush of air

Selection

"When Marly woke up the next morning, there was . . ." to ". . .morning. Who wanted to go out?"

The complete model will be found on pp. 50, 51, 52 of Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956).

Introductory remarks: We have met Marly and Joe from Miracles on Maple Hill (by Virginia Sorensen) once before. They were the children that had difficulty with a truant officer. (There was not one child who had forgotten. The class said, "Oh yes, 'Annie-Get-Your-Gun' was the truant officer.")

This time we are going to meet Marly and Joe in a different situation. Joe has special plans for himself, and they do not include Marly. Let's join them now and see what's their problem.

Discussion

After the selection was read orally by the pupils, the following discussion was developed.

Q. DID ANY OF THE DESCRIPTIONS STRIKE YOU AS BEING PARTICULARLY INTERESTING?

R. Some of the things that are said about the things Marly saw.

Q. LET US SEE IF WE CAN FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT MARLY SAW FROM HER WINDOW. DID MARLY ENJOY THE THINGS SHE SAW THAT MORNING?

R. She must have because it says "there was another miracle right outside her window."

Q. WHO WOULD LIKE TO READ THE FIRST PAGE ALOUD FOR US AGAIN?

Sandra Hall: I'll read it Mrs. Nesper.

Q. THOSE OF YOU LISTENING BE CAREFUL--IF YOU CAN LISTEN TO SANDRA AND FOLLOW WITH YOUR EYES, FINE. BUT, IF YOU ARE LOST, JUST LISTEN TO THE THINGS SANDRA WILL BE READING.

[NOTE: I emphasized the importance of listening because the children could always go back to the duplicated materials, but they would not always have the opportunity to listen to a reader who was capable of emphasizing these very fine descriptive passages. Once a child had said to me, "I can read good, but I can't always understand what I've read--I can hear it but I don't always understand it."]

Q. NOW I'LL AGAIN ASK, DID ANY OF THE DESCRIPTIONS SANDRA READ, INTEREST YOU?

R. Yes. "There were ten million little crystals shining on every single branch of every single tree, down to the littlest twig."

Q. DOES THAT SENTENCE REMIND YOU OF SOMETHING WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS WINTER?

R. Something like our ice storm.

Q. YES, THIS THEN, IS NOT SO VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU AND I HAVE SEEN FROM OUR WINDOWS RIGHT HERE IN CLASS.

R. How about this one here? "The tree right next to her window was a wilderness of shining threads, as if every branch, every twig was spun from ice."

Q. WHAT DOES THAT SENTENCE SAY?

R. Well, it was covered with ice.

Q. YES, WE KNOW WHERE THE TREE IS--"RIGHT NEXT TO HER WINDOW" AND IT IS COVERED WITH ICE, BUT IS SOMETHING MISSING FROM YOUR EXPLANATION?

R. Well, he didn't say anything about "wilderness of shining threads."

Q. WHAT'S A WILDERNESS?

R. A forest where animals live, where no one else is.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT MIGHT MEAN WILDERNESS?

R. 1) a wild place with lots of trees growing
2) a place far from people

Q. EXPLAIN TO ME WHY THIS TREE WOULD LOOK LIKE A WILDERNESS OF SHINING THREADS?

R. Oh--everything on the tree is covered with ice, just like that big old tree in front of my house, and you can see through the ice. And this tree must have been big so that it took up the whole window so it looked like a wilderness.

Q. LOOK AT THE NEXT SENTENCE--"AMONG THE THREADS HOPPED THE COLD LITTLE BLACK FIGURES OF THE BIRDS." WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY THREADS?

R. The branches and twigs.

Q. HOW ARE THE BIRDS DESCRIBED?

R. "Hopped the cold little black figures of the birds."

Q. READ THE REST OF THE SELECTION SILENTLY. ARE THERE ANY OTHER DESCRIPTIONS THAT WERE INTERESTING?

R. 1) Yes, her teeth were chattering while she dressed.

2) She could hear her father sleeping so he must have been making snoring sounds with his mouth.

3) She slipped down the hall, not walked or stepped or running or ran.

4) Joe didn't wear any coat; he wore a heavy coat.

Q. LET US DO A LITTLE DETECTIVE WORK WITH THIS SELECTION OF MIRACLES ON MAPLE HILL. LOOK AND SEE IF THERE ARE ANY THINGS OR OBJECTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE INVESTIGATED. FOR EXAMPLE IF YOU WANTED TO FIND OUT HOW THE AUTHOR DESCRIBED OR QUALIFIED "SUN," YOU WOULD RAISE YOUR HAND AND TELL US YOU WANTED TO INVESTIGATE "SUN." THE SECRETARY WOULD PUT THE WORD "SUN" ON THE BOARD AND WE, THE DETECTIVES, WOULD READ WHAT?

R. "Was coming up"

Q. GOOD, NOW YOU'VE GOT IT. (The game continued as follows.)

Objects	Descriptions
sun	was coming up
morning	clear and frosty out
branch	ten million little crystals shining . . . on every single tree, down to the littlest twig

branches and twigs	threads, spun from ice
tree	a wilderness of shining threads
	clicking its boughs together
	among the threads hopped . . . birds
birds	hopped the cold little black figures
Marly	felt as if she could never in the world look at it long enough
	heard the door downstairs open and close
	she heard, when she leaned close to look, the tree clicking its boughs
	tugged at the window--window wouldn't budge
	she pounded and shouted
	watched him disappear
	felt jealous
	toes which were folded up from the cold floor
	dressed with her teeth chattering
	slipped along the hall
	heard Daddy sleeping
	She was cold. Brrr.
	opened door,--blast of cold air came in
Daddy	when he first came home, he was always having chills
	had to stay in bed mornings with the hot pad at his feet
Joe	dressed in his heavy coat and boots and gloves and had his green ear muffs on

turned and looked up

disgusted look on his face

mouth made motions that looked like the words "shut up!"

he turned and hurried off up the hill

Well! Didn't he think he was smart though, going out on a secret adventure

the last time Joe disappeared he hadn't been such a great hero

[NOTE: We wrote these notes on the reverse side of the duplicated materials. To keep the notes safe, I collected the papers and returned them the next day. However before the papers were returned the next day, I led the following review discussion.]

Q. IF I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT A SWEET POTATO PIE WAS, HOW WOULD YOU INTRODUCE ME TO THIS FOOD? -

R. Well, I would show you one.

Q. THAT MEANS I WOULD HAVE TO HAVE ___?___ (eyes). WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU DO TO MAKE SURE I WOULD NEVER FORGET THE SWEET POTATO PIE?

R. Well, you might smell it and eat it.

Q. THIS MEANS I WOULD HAVE TO HAVE TWO MORE THINGS HELPING ME. IF I SMELLED IT, I WOULD HAVE TO HAVE A ___?___ (nose). IF I ATE IT, I NEED ___?___ (teeth in your mouth) MY NOSE MUST BE ABLE TO ___?___ (smell things) AND MY MOUTH MUST BE ABLE TO ___?___ (taste things) SO FAR, I NEED EYES FOR SEEING, A NOSE TO SMELL, A MOUTH TO TASTE, BUT TELL ME, HOW WOULD I EAT IT?

R. With your hands.

Q. AND MY HANDS WOULD TELL ME HOW IT ___?___ (feels) ALL RIGHT, SMELL, SIGHT, TOUCH, AND TASTE ARE NEEDED TO TEACH ME ABOUT SOMETHING NEW--IN THIS CASE, A SWEET POTATO PIE. TELL ME, HOW WOULD I KNOW I WAS ASKED TO TASTE THE PIE?

R. Oh, Mrs. Nesper, I would tell you to pick it up and eat it.

Q. OH, BUT THAT MEANS I NEED ANOTHER THING. WHAT IS IT?

R. Ears for hearing.

Q. FINE! THEN I CAN LEARN THROUGH THESE SENSES--THE SENSE OF SIGHT, SMELL, SOUND, TOUCH AND TASTE. I'M GOING TO RETURN YOUR PAPERS AND I WANT YOU TO TURN TO YOUR NOTES. LET US SEE HOW MANY OF THESE SENSES ARE USED IN THE DESCRIPTIONS. (We turned to our notes and began to read them orally. As each description was read, the children discussed which sense or senses were employed by the author. As soon as the senses involved were decided upon, the children wrote these along the side of their descriptions.)

Objects	Descriptions	Senses
sun	was coming up	see, sight
morning	clear and frosty out	sight
branch	ten million little crystals shining . . . on every single tree, down to the littlest twig	sight
branches and twigs	threads, spun from ice	sight
tree	a wilderness of shining threads;	sight
	clicking its boughs together;	sound
	among the threads hopped . . . birds	sight
birds	hopped the cold little black figures	sight, touch

[NOTE: A child wanted to use the word "feel" because "cold" was used, but we found that "feeling" may be confusing since the next description concerned "inner feelings." The class resolved: "To touch is to feel with our fingers, hands, or skin, but the feelings inside us are something else." (I gave them the word "emotion." "The feelings inside us are emotions."]

Marly	felt as if she could never in the world look at it long enough	emotion, sight
	heard the door downstairs open and close	sound
	she heard, when she leaned close to look, the tree clicking its boughs	sound and sight
	tugged at the window--window wouldn't budge	touch
	she pounded and shouted	sound, touch
	watched him disappear	sight
	felt jealous	jealousy is an emotion
	toes which were folded up from the cold floor	touch (feeling with skin
	dressed with her teeth chattering	touch of clothing and the cold; sight to see clothes; sound
	slipped along the hall	touch to walk down
	heard Daddy sleeping	sound
	She was cold. Brrr.	touch--cold, brrr
	opened the door and a blast of cold air came in	sound of door
Daddy	when he first came home, he was always having chills	sight--saw him touch--the chills
	had to stay in bed mornings with the hot pad at his feet	sight--saw him in bed, touch--heat

Joe	dressed in his heavy coat and boots and gloves and had his green ear muffs on	sight
	turned and looked up	sight
	disgusted look on his face	sight
	mouth made motions that looked like the words "shut up!"	sight
	he turned and hurried off up the hill	sight
	Well! Didn't he think he was smart though, going out on a secret adventure	sight, emotion--feeling smart
	the last time Joe disappeared he hadn't been such a great hero	sight, emotion--a great hero

Q. WHAT SENSES HAVE WE USED?

R. Sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste.

Q. AND WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT EMOTIONS?

R. It is better to call things we can hold or feel with our bodies by the senses, like touch, and the things we can't feel on the outside of our bodies--emotions.

Q. IF I GAVE YOU AN ICE CUBE TO HOLD, YOU WOULD BE USING WHAT SENSE?

R. Sense of touch.

Q. WHAT IS JEALOUSY?

R. An emotion.

[NOTE: The papers were collected and returned the following day.]

The Writing Experience

The entire selection of Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen was reread orally. Then various pupils related personal experiences similar to those that happened in the model.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN EXPERIENCE LIKE MARLY AND JOE ON THIS PARTICULAR MORNING?

R. 1) I got up early and got into trouble once.

2) But you don't want us to write just about getting up early do you?

Sammy: (Before I could answer he said--) No stupid, you're supposed to add sounds and sights to your composition. What do you think we've been doing all this time?

R. You mean these things are important to a story?

[NOTE: At this time we recalled the times when stories were presented with all details removed, and the reactions of the pupils to the short model. After this brief discussion, in which the class decided details were important, the pupils wrote compositions.

[A few pupils used friends as "sounding boards" and it was not uncommon to hear, "How does this sound?" "Are you sure it's okay?" "Go ahead and write in there" "How do you spell ________?" Many children however, are not willing to reread their work, much less offer it for criticism. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 73-84.]

Lesson 6

Preliminaries: I duplicated and distributed the selection about the old-fashioned stove from Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen. The difficult vocabulary words were defined by the children during the first oral reading of the selection.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	sugarhouse	place where maple sap is boiled and made into syrup
2.	billowing	pour out, coming out fast, gushing
3.	breathless	out of breath, can't breathe
4.	absolutely huge	big, without a doubt--enormous
5.	jerk	quick movements, to pull back
6.	relief flooded over her	gladness poured over her
7.	damper	something on a stove, round like a dish, that lets in the air so the fire can burn

Selection

Introductory remarks: We again meet Marly and Joe, the hero and heroine of Miracles on Maple Hill (by Virginia Sorensen). (The class decided if the story is about a boy, the boy is the hero--Marly had said "no great hero"--and if the story is about a girl, she is called the heroine.) Marly had just closed the door and said that "Joe is welcome to all outdoors this morning!" Now she gets a terrific idea.

"Then she had an idea. She would surprise...." to "....instead; there's all the difference in the world."

The complete model will be found on pp. 52, 53, 54 of Miracles on Maple Hill by Virginia Sorensen (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956).

Discussion

The selection was read orally by the pupils. We then turned back to the beginning of the model to find out how the author described various objects. The model was reread a few lines at a time.

R. "Then she had an idea. She would surprise everybody. She would build a fine fire and get breakfast all ready."

Q. HOW WAS FIRE DESCRIBED?

R. Fine, she would build a fine fire. (The reader continued.) "And when Mother . . . smelled something good."

Q. HOW WAS BREAKFAST DESCRIBED, EVEN IF THIS IS ALL MARLY'S IMAGINATION?

R. Breakfast smelled good.

Q. HOW WERE THE PARENTS DESCRIBED?

R. They came down, stood by the door and stared!

[NOTE: I wrote the first three descriptions on the chalkboard; then I asked a class secretary to continue with the recording of the responses for each object.]

Objects	Descriptions
fire	build a fine fire
	exciting to build
	lovely
	something began to go wrong with that fire right away
breakfast	smelled something good
parents	come down, stood by the door and stared
paper, wood and coal	plenty
	stuffed in some of each
	caught right away and flared out brightly
	had stopped burning and was just sitting there smoking
Marly	had an idea
	would surprise everybody
	would build a fine fire
	and get breakfast ready

	never built a fire
	lifted the first lid
	would boil water and make coffee
	would just mix up a batch of pancakes (batch qualifies or clearly describes pancakes)
	struck a match
	put the lid back on and waited
	opened the lid to look
	found another match and tried again, coughing
	opened one (lid was understood) and stuffed in a lot more paper quickly and lighted another match
	stood still and felt her heart beating harder and harder
	her voice, her face, her whole body seemed breathless with fear
	relief flooded over her and she felt light, light, light
	a huge gladness in her that it actually made a lump in her throat
	(the idea she admitted) was stupid and terrible
stove	funny old
	filled with things to burn
smoke	little curls . . . began to come up around all the stove lids
	came out this time, simply pouring out around every lid
	simply pouring out, not only out of the paper but out of the kindlings too

	out came the smoke in another huge cloud, simply billowing
	suddenly the smoke stopped coming
Mother	"Dale! Something's burning!"
	"Oh, our nice clean curtains."

[NOTE: Here we got into a discussion on the three things that were important. 1) Marly tried to do a good deed, but it backfired; it was a mistake, 2) Father's concern was safety first, 3) Mother, as most mother's are, was concerned with cleanliness--"our nice clean curtains."]

Daddy	feet hit the floor
	running along the hall and down the stairs
	pushed her aside with a hard big sweep of his arm that almost knocked her down
	opened the stove lid
	put the lid back and reached around the side of the stove and pushed something
	stood looking at the stove; then looked at Mother, and then he looked at her
	he was going to be madder than she had ever seen him
	stood absolutely huge in his pajamas

[NOTE: We discussed why Father would look huge. 1) Pajamas are not made to fit like regular clothes; they are made to fit loosely. This may have made Father look large. 2) Also, whenever we do something wrong and we are caught, the one who catches us looks larger than he really is. For example: The policeman looks large to father when father has just gone through a red light.]

	turned back to the stove and opened the lids again and pulled out some of the things
	his hands went jerk, jerk
	his face looked hard

I should have told you about that
damper, he turned, smiling

[NOTE: When we had completed our search for descriptions we discussed the roles each character played. The child wanted to do a good deed, but because she didn't know how to make a fire in a "funny old stove" she almost caused a serious accident. Father didn't scold because he realized Marly had a good idea, but he had failed her by not bothering to explain how the stove worked.]

Q. MOTHER, WHO REALLY ISN'T MUCH DIFFERENT FROM ALL MOTHER'S, IS WHAT?

R. Worried about her dirty curtains.

Q. YES, SHE WORRIED ABOUT THE CURTAINS. BUT DO YOU THINK THAT WAS THE FIRST THING THAT CAME TO HER MIND?

R. Probably not.

Q. MOTHERS ARE PEOPLE WHO SOOTHE, ROCK, PROTECT AND WORRY ABOUT EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY. IS MARLY'S MOTHER DIFFERENT?

R. No.

[NOTE: A picture was drawn, duplicated, and stapled to each child's copy of the selection. The picture showed poor Marly bewildered by the billowing smoke, father entering the old farmhouse kitchen, and mother's rather modern curtains surrounded in thick curling smoke. The children were amused to see what an old-fashioned kitchen looked like.]

The Writing Experience

Q. PLEASE LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE OBJECTS AND FIND WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE THESE OBJECTS.

CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT SENSES THE AUTHOR EMPLOYED TO TELL US HER STORY?

R. Smell
1) all the smoke in this story must have been terrible to smell (Sight too is in all of these said several pupils)
2) stopped burning
3) paper had stopped burning and was just sitting there smoking
4) more smoke came out
5) lighted another match
6) smoke simply pouring out
7) Something's burning!
8) smoke in another huge cloud, simply billowing

Sounds
1) father's feet
2) the lids on the stove
3) the paper and kindling wood in the stove made noise

Sight
everything is sight
1) the smoke
2) the curtains
3) the stove

Taste
no one ate the pancakes, but the smoke leaves your mouth feeling funny

Touch
1) Father's hands jerk, jerk
2) almost knocked Marly down

Q. HAVE WE LEARNED ANYTHING ELSE FROM THIS MODEL?

R. 1) The kind of people they were

2) And how they acted

3) What they did

4) And how mothers should act

5) And how good parents should treat their kids

Q. ARE THESE THINGS EXPLAINED ONLY THROUGH SOUND, SIGHT, SMELL, TASTE AND TOUCH?

R. Oh, one more, emotions--Father's emotions, Mother's emotions, and Marly's.

1) Father took the blame for not teaching Marly about the damper

2) Mother was worried

3) Marly was flooded with relief

Q. HAVE ANY OF YOU EVER HAD AN EXPERIENCE WHEN YOU TRIED TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP SOMEONE ELSE AND IT DIDN'T WORK OUT? (Several children related their experiences. Since there were visitors in the class this day, the children were eager to begin writing.)

I'M SO GLAD SO MANY OF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCES YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL. WHY DON'T YOU WRITE THEM DOWN JUST AS THOUGH YOU WERE TELLING THEM TO ME?

[NOTE: The children began writing immediately. When they were finished, many pupils showed their compositions to the visitors. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 16-28.]

A Supplementary Note

The day previous to the teaching of this lesson Andrew McDaniel came to me and said, "Mrs. Nesper, I'd like to write you a story about something I did a long time ago. You won't believe me, I know you won't. Will you?" I told Andrew if he wanted to write a composition I would be very happy to read it. "But," he continued, "you didn't say you'd believe the story?" I replied that I would have to read the story before I could judge whether it was a "story"* or truth. "That'll be OK. But are you going to take this composition to Northwestern to show to Dr. Douglas?" When I said yes I would, he turned and said, "I better not do it then, so far he thinks I'm pretty good, when he reads this he won't have nothing to do with me." I assured him that Dr. Douglas was interested in everything he wrote--"He is very interested in what you have to say." "Well," said Andrew, "Okay, but if you think he'll be mad at me, don't show it to him."

Part 1

One sunny hot day whim me and my brother come back from sunner school at straight 2: o clock my brother went over There friends houes and Then and my littest brother fell to sleep and my aunt little baby was in The bed and The baby start crying and we woke up and gave The baby some milk and The baby was still crying and then my face got red like fire and Then I told my brother to get me some sheets and some pillows and Then he put then in The Trunk and lock it and Threw The key away and Then we was going To put The Trunk To fire and Then my little brother said no no almo and hit my littest brother and bust his nose and his lip and he went To sleep so did you know who and at 4: o clock straight my brother stepped in The door and woke me up and asked Me where was This baby and I said what

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*The words "lie" or "liar" are terrible words to use with these children; "story" means the same thing but it is less offensive.

The baby in The Trunk and she said where is The key and I said I threw it away and Then She Said get on The phone and call The fire man and The police at first They said let wait a little bit and Then he said dam the police and Then The police pulled up and got in the car and The baby was in the fire truck and then The doctor dropped his head and said its to late lady to late to late and police said Do you want him put up no no no no no no no no no no and thin he said allright lady allright lady

--Andrew McDaniel

Part 2

So The police brought us back home and started asking questions like how many sisters do you have and so my mother Told him and Then he said we should whipped your ass real good Should we whipped his ass and my aunt said no no no no and They said ok and They left and Then I was scared to go out side I thought They would be waiting for me and kill me and Then I dreamed about what happen and I was scared read scared so scared That I could not open The door at all for seven hold months and my Mother beated me and my daddy hit me almost

--Andrew McDaniel

When Andrew had completed the story, he handed me his paper. When I did not respond immediately, Andrew said, "Oh, you don't believe me, you don't like my story." Although I was aware of the skillful technique of Andrew's paper, I was momentarily more concerned about the content. I wondered if it was fact or fantasy. I questioned him about the truth of his story. He replied, "All I'm going to say is, I have terrible dreams and at times I think I'm still doing it and one day when I really get hot I don't know what I'll do, maybe I'll do something worse."

But I still wondered. Either way, I thought, we should know in order to help Andrew in his school relationships. I showed the story to the principal. A conference was arranged with Andrew's mother. When Andrew's mother was shown the composition, she said it was just part of Andrew's way of getting attention from the teacher. Later, when Andrew and I left the school office, he said, "Mrs. Nesper, I don't care if you believe me or not, the story is true."

Part two of the composition was written the day of Lesson 5 when two visitors from Northwestern's Curriculum Center in English visited with the class. Both parts of the composition were given to the visitors--with no comment or explanation--and one, without realizing it, revealed emotion through a facial expression. Andrew was alert and interpreted the expression negatively. He said to me, "No, no, no, no! I'm bad, they don't like what I write; you lied to me; you cheated me. I'll never write for you again and if anyone else comes to see us, or that Dr. Douglas comes here, he'll never forget me, I'll make him know me as bad, bad, bad!" Andrew did not explain what had happened to make him feel this way. (See page 51 of Unit I for additional information about Andrew.)

For the next four weeks, Andrew did just as he promised--not only did he not write, he would not allow others to write either. He took the pupils' pencils, pens, and paper, and when this didn't stop the compositions, he shouted out "Oh, you don't have to write compositions any more. They're all no good anyway." He became so belligerent during succeeding periods that he had to be sent to the office until the children had finished their compositions. Finally he came to me and said, "Mrs.

Nesper did I ever tell you why I stopped writing? Well, one of those visitors wanted to tear up my papers." When I tried to explain that he certainly must have misunderstood the situation, he replied, "Oh, if you are going to take their side I'm not going to tell you anything anymore." It seemed I could not reach him, his frustrations were so deep seated that everything I said only made matters worse. Finally I decided to change my approach. "Andrew," I asked him, "who is boss* at Northwestern's Curriculum Center in English?"

"Dr. Douglas."

"Right, and he is the only boss there. Was the visitor Dr. Douglas?"

He smiled and said, "You know she was an old lady."

"Well, Andrew, if the visitor wasn't Dr. Douglas, what are you worried about? As long as he likes to read all the things you write then you are very lucky."

"Gee, I didn't look at it that way. But listen, if he is the boss that means you got a boss too. Well I guess we'll all have to please the professor, only."

Andrew finally started to participate in the discussion periods, and he wrote several compositions in the later lessons.

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*"Boss" means leader, or person in charge.

Lesson 7

Preliminaries: A list of difficult words and the selection from Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry were duplicated ready for distribution to the class. After an entire period discussing the vocabulary, with the children supplying definitions, I passed out the selection for oral reading.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	sea	ocean
2.	Mafatu	boy, hero
3.	surrounded	cover, block, circle
4.	thunder	noise from sky, usually with a storm
5.	crash	break, sound, noise
6.	reef	narrow ridge of rock near the top of water
7.	mutter	talk, chatter, mumble low sounds
8.	threat	scare, frighten
9.	fury	menace, rage, anger
10.	hurricane	storm with violent wind and heavy rain
11.	swept	blow, movement
12.	Hikueru	name of tropical island
13.	barrier	block, stands in your way, cuts off
14.	sea urchins	sea animals
15.	reef pools	water surrounded by reefs
16.	canoes	boat
17.	scattered	spread or thrown out

18.	intervals	time or space between
19.	warnings	notice in advance
20.	nervous	shaking, exciting, worried, upset
21.	animal awareness	alertness, instinct
22.	impending	to hang over, to threaten
23.	swift current	fast moving water
24.	shoulder of reef-passage	the banks on each side of the channel that led to the ocean
25.	tides	movement of water affected by gravity and the pull of the sun and moon
26.	millrace	the force or power of a current of water that works a mill wheel
27.	seized	capture, grab, hold
28.	frail craft	breakable boat, boat that is not strong
29.	despite	no matter
30.	skill	knowledge, know how
31.	crest of the churning tide	rushing waters of the tide
32.	despairing cry	no hope
33.	wailing	crying
34.	frigate's wing	a web-footed, long winged, sea bird
35.	screaming	hollering
36.	hissing	sounds
37.	spray	jets of water mist
38.	outrigger	narrow beams that have a log at the end, fastened at the side of a sea-going canoe to keep it from upsetting
39.	thwarts	braces across the canoe that support the outrigger
40.	sprang	past tense of spring, move suddenly
41.	capsized	upset, over turn

42.	gasped	to catch one's breath desperately, with difficulty
43.	clung	to hold tightly and not let go
44.	Moena	the Sea God
45.	uninhabited	not lived in, without people living there
46.	islet	a little island
47.	Tekoto	name
48.	shrouded	covered, as by a garment
49.	purau pole	pole used with their boats
50.	grim	stern, harsh, fierce, without mercy
51.	revealed	uncovered; find out
52.	sharks	large flesh eating fish
53.	thirst	need for water
54.	palms	inside of hands or under side of hand
55.	beckoned	signal to a person by a motion of the hand or head
56.	cast upon	tossed, washed upon something
57.	pinnacle of coral	top, highest point
58.	crackled	make slight sharp sounds
59.	managed	conduct, control; handle
60.	sustaining	hold up; support
61.	hush	quiet, absence of noise
62.	pandanus mats	used as mattress
63.	eternal	never ending, asways
64.	limbs	2 arms, 2 legs
65.	whimpering	soft crying
66.	shuddered	tremble with horror, cold, wet, fear
67.	hurled	throw with much force
68.	quivered	shake, shiver

69.	assault	vigorous attack
70.	christened	baptised as a Christian
71.	tupapau	the ghost-spirit
72.	possesses	own; have
73.	sympathy	having the same feeling; sadness, s sorrow
74.	treated	act toward someone
75.	scorn	sad, look down upon or despise
76.	include	to add; addition of someone

Selection

Introductory remarks: The story takes place on a south sea island. The chief's son, Mafatu is the hero. As a three year old child, he experienced what very few children in this world have lived through. As a result of this incident, he fears the sea. This terrible problem is something Mafatu wrestles with day and night. He is the chief's son; he must command respect so that he can rule justly and lead his warriors into battle, if necessary. The sea and Mafatu would one day have to meet and Mafatu must conquer his fear and make peace with the sea, because his people are completely dependent upon the sea. Mafatu's fears were well known on the island and often discussed among the tribesmen. Life, as you may imagine, was very unpleasant for him.

Q. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE MAFATU?

R. I'd have to go out and show everybody that I could get over my fear.

Q. HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?

R. I'd go to the sea by myself so that no one could say I was yellow.

Q. THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT MAFATU DID--HE FACED HIS FEARS ALONE. DOES IT TAKE COURAGE TO FACE SOMETHING YOU ARE AFRAID OF?

R. Yes

Q. IS THIS A BRAVE ACT?

R. 1) Yes

2) Sure, because you don't hide from the thing you are afraid of.

"It was the sea that Mafatu feared . . ." to ". . .angry with us all because Mafatu is afraid!"

The complete model will be found on pp. 8-12 of Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940).

Discussion

After the model was read aloud, the following comments were made which led into a lengthy discussion.

R. 1) Oh, teacher, this poor boy really had trouble.

2) The sea is a terrible things to take the boy's mother.

3) His mother was stupid; she could have lived if she went with the other fishermen.

4) Well it says "skills" for his mother, so she must have known how to handle a boat in rough weather.

5) Yes, but it wasn't just weather, it was a hurricane.

6) I saw a hurricane on T.V. once, you sure can't do much then.

7) She had plenty of "skills," she saved her baby, didn't she?

8) Those people should have been ashamed of themselves for talking about Mafatu. He went through a lot, no wonder he hates the sea.

9) Yeah, his stepmother is a "doll," she probably talks about Mafatu so much that his father doesn't love him.

10) And that stepbrother of his got all those terrible things from his mother. They are both nasty people.

11) It's the people that made him crazy that's why he things the sea is after him--like some ghost or something.

Q. IS THERE ANYONE IN THIS ROOM WHO HAS NEVER, NEVER, CALLED ANOTHER HUMAN BEING A NAME?

R. (No answers.)

Q. IS THERE ANYONE IN THIS ROOM WHO HAS NEVER BEEN AFRAID OF SOMETHING--ANYTHING?

R. (No answers.)

Q. I GATHER THAT AT SOMETIME, EACH OF YOU HAS SAID OR CALLED SOMEONE A NAME THAT THEY WOULD RATHER NOT REMEMBER. I ALSO GATHER THAT EACH OF YOU HAS BEEN AFRAID OF SOMETHING.

R. Well, yes, I guess so.

Q. THINK NOW, ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM MAFATU?

R. 1) No, I'm afraid of the dark.

2) I'm afraid of not passing.

3) I'm afraid of getting whipped.

Q. ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE PEOPLE ON THAT ISLAND, HIS STEPMOTHER, BROTHER, OR FATHER?

R. Well, I'm not so much like the stepbrother, but I might be like the father--"heard the whispers, and the man grew silent and grim."

Q. ARE THE PEOPLE IN THIS STORY BELIEVABLE? COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?

R. 1) Yes, it could and not just there on the island. Here, everyday there are fights, "sigging," telling stories and everything else.

2) And if you can't fight back, they'll make you crazy. They'll chase you down the street, steal your school stuff, call you names, beat up on you in school, after school in alleys, hallways--wherever they catch you. If you fight back, even once, they'll all leave you alone.

3) Yeah, teachers say don't fight, walk away, be more intelligent! (ha, ha, ha!) You've got to hit back if you want people to leave you alone.

Q. HAVE YOU HEARD EVERYTHING YOU HAVE SAID? YOU ARE SAYING JUST WHAT MAFATU MUST DO. HE MUST STAND UP AND FIGHT BACK, BUT NOT THE PEOPLE--THE SEA.

R. 1) Say, that's right, only he isn't going to fight the kids, is he?

2) No, he is going after the sea.

Q. TOMORROW, I THINK WE SHOULD LOOK CLOSER AT THE DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGES.

Stanley: You know, this guy doesn't write like other authors. This is really different stuff. I think I like it better even though it's harder.

Q. HARDER THAN WHAT, STANLEY?

R. Harder, I think than Miracles on Maple Hill or Rufus M.

[NOTE: The materials were collected and returned the next day. After the model was read aloud, the children searched for passages describing Mafatu, the sea, Mafatu's parents and a few other things. I chose a child to act as secretary and place the descriptions on the chalkboard. The rest of the class wrote the notes on the reverse side of their duplicated materials.]

Q. (I began the period by saying) WE ARE GOING TO READ CALL IT COURAGE OUT LOUD. I WANT YOU TO LOOK FOR THE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANT THINGS IN THE MODEL.

Stanley: I'd say that Mafatu was important, so I'll look for his descriptions.

Gylda: I think the sea is important, too.

Sammy: His mother--his real mother and father are important.

Q. I THINK THESE ARE FINE. IF YOU WANT TO ADD OTHER DESCRIPTIONS, DON'T HESITATE TO DO SO. (The children chose the following descriptions for each object.)

Objects	Descriptions
Mafatu	feared the sea. . . . surrounded by it
	filled his ears
	wherever he turned-- the sea
	could not remember when the fear of it first had taken hold
	twelve years later . . . he remembered that terrible morning
	would never forget the sound of his mother's despairing cry
	felt that something was terribly wrong
	he set up a loud wailing
	little boy gasped when the cold water struck him
	he clung to his mother's neck
	the little boy . . . arms locked about his mother's neck
	buried his head against his mother's cold neck
	filled with terror
	even forgot the thirst that burned his throat
	little boy was too weak even to cry
	awoke and sat upright
	terrible trembling seized the boy's limbs, while a cold sweat broke out on his forehead
	seemed to see again the faces of the fishermen who had found the dead mother and her whimpering child
	picture still colored his dreams
	shuddered
	had been christened Stout Heart . . . was afraid of the sea

fisherman? warrior?

old people were not unkind

girls laughed

boys failed to include him

stepmother knew small sympathy for him

stepbrother treated him with open scorn

Mafatu is afraid

the sea

surrounded by it (Mafatu)

thunder of it

crash of it upon the reef

mutter of it at sunset

threat and fury of its storms

swift current

a meeting of the tides that swept like a millrace

seized the frail craft in its swift race

crest of the churning tide

waves lifted and struck at one another, their crest hissing with spray

cold water struck him

Moano, the Sea God was reaching up, seeking to draw them down

swift current bore directly down upon the islet

sharks circling, circling

sea's hungry fingers

muttered its eternal threat to the reef

mighty seas

gathering far out

	hurled
	the whole island quivered under the assault (the assault of the sea pounding on the island)
Mother	searched for the sea urchins
	skill
	despairing cry
	sprang forward to seize her child
	clinging to the purau pole
	fought on
	cast upon the pinnacle of the coral
	crawled ashore
	scarcely enough strength left to pull her child beyond the reach of the sea
	managed to press the cool, sustaining meat (of the cocoanut) to her child's lips before she died
Father	proud
	heard the whispers and the man grew silent and grim

Sandra: I think we should describe the people, now.

People of the tribe	nervous and ill at ease, charged, it seemed with an almost animal awareness of the impending storm

Sandra: What's animal awareness?

Q. DID YOU EVER TRY TO KILL A FLY OR A MOSQUITO AND JUST AS YOU WERE ABOUT TO STRIKE, IT FLEW AWAY?

R. Yes

Q. WHY DID IT FLY AWAY?

R. Because it has special eyes to see in lots of directions.

Q. WELL THAT MIGHT BE DESCRIBED AS ANIMAL AWARENESS--KNOWING THAT DANGER IS CLOSE BY. IN THE CASE OF THESE INSECTS, THEY ARE ESPECIALLY EQUIPPED TO FLEE FROM DANGER. CAN YOU THINK OF BETTER EXAMPLES?

R. 1) Dogs, sometimes wail when their masters die. At least that's what I've heard.

2) I saw on T.V. when the hunter was ready to shoot, the animal turned and ran off.

Q. YES, THAT'S IT--THE ABILITY TO FEEL DANGER BEFORE IT STRIKES. (A few more descriptions were noted.)

night	closed down upon them, swift as a frigate's wing darkening the known world
dawn	grim light
wind	rushed in at them, screaming
islet of Tekoto	lay shrouded in darkness scarcely more than a ledge
	palms . . . beckoned with their promise of life

[NOTE: The duplicated materials with the descriptions noted on the reverse side were collected. Before I returned them the next day, I went to the chalkboard and drew an eye, nose, hand, ear, mouth, and a figure with a heart shaded upon the chest.]

Q. WHAT IS THIS AND WHAT DOES IT DO? (I pointed to the eye.)

R. An eye and you see with it--oh, sight

Q. WHAT IS THIS? (I pointed to the nose.)

R. Nose--smell

Q. AND THIS?

R. A hand--touch

Q. WHAT IS THIS?

R. An ear--sound

Q. WHAT IS THIS?

R. A mouth--taste

Q. WHAT IS THIS PICTURE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT?

R. 1) A person with a heart--emotions

2) Say, that's a very good way to remember those senses.

Q. LET US READ MAFATU'S STORY AGAIN AND WHEN WE HAVE FINISHED WE WILL RETURN TO OUR NOTES ON THE DESCRIPTIONS YOU WROTE YESTERDAY. (The materials were returned and the selection was reread.) NOW LET'S GO BACK AND READ OUR DESCRIPTIONS. WHEN YOU KNOW WHAT SENSE OR SENSES ARE INVOLVED, RAISE YOUR HAND AND TELL US WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED. (The following chart shows the results.)

Objects	Descriptions	Senses
Mafatu	feared the sea . . . surrounded by it	fear is an emotion; sight
	filled his ears	sound
	wherever he turned - the sea	sight
	could not remember when the fear of it first had taken hold	emotions
	twelve years later . . . he remembered that terrible morning	emotions (to think something terrible is in us)
	would never forget the sound of his mother's despairing cry	sound
	felt that something was terribly wrong	emotions (to feel inside)
	he set up a loud wailing	sound
	little boy gasped when the cold water struck him	touch; sound (gasped)
	he clung to his mother's neck	touch

the little boy . . . arms locked about his mother's neck	touched
buried his head against his mother's cold neck	touched
filled with terror	emotions (terror from fear)
even forgot the thirst that burned his throat	taste
little boy was too weak even to cry	sight
awoke and sat upright	sight, touch
terrible trembling seized the boy's limbs, while a cold sweat broke out on his forehead	fear, emotions; touch
seemed to see again the faces of the fishermen who had found the dead mother and her whimpering child	sight; sound; touch
picture still colored his dreams	sight, maybe sound
shuddered	sight, fear-emotion
had been christened Stout Heart . . . was afraid of the sea	emotion; sight
fisherman? warrior?	to be one and the other; leader; fight your emotions
old people were not unkind	sight, sound maybe
girls laughed	sound
boys failed to include him	sight, not to see, avoid
stepmother treated him with open scorn	sight, sound
stepbrother treated him with open scorn	sight, sound
Mafatu is afraid	emotion

the sea	surrounded by it (Mafatu)	sight
	thunder of it	sound
	crash of it upon the reef	sound, sight
	matter of it at sunset	sound, sight
	threat and fury of its storms	emotions (are in storm threats)
	swift current	sight
	a meeting of the tides that swept like a millrace	sound, sight
	seized the frail craft in its swift race	sound, sight, touch
	crest of the churning tide	sound, sight
	waves lifted and struck at one another, their crest hissing with spray	sound, sight
	cold water struck him	touch
	Moano, the Sea God was reaching up, seeking to draw them down	emotions
	swift current bore directly down upon the islet	touch, sight, sound
	sharks circling, circling	sight
	sea's hungry fingers (waves are the fingers)	sound, sight
	muttered its eternal threat to the reef	sound
	mighty seas	sight
	gathering far out	sight
	hurled	sight, sound
	the whole island quivered under the assault	touch

Mother	searched for the sea urchins	sight
	skill	touch, sight, sound, maybe smell and emotion too
	despairing cry	sound, emotions
	sprang forward to seize her child	sight, touch
	clinging to the purau pole	sight
	fought on	emotions, sight, touch sound, taste of the salt water
	cast upon the pinnacle of the coral	touch, sight, sound
	crawled ashore	touched
	scarcely enough strength left of pull her child beyond the reach of the sea	touch
	managed to press the cool, sustaining meat (of the cocoanut) to her child's lips before she died	sight, sound, taste, touch
Father	proud	emotion
	heard the whispers and the man grew silent and grim	sound; emotions
People of the tribe	nervous and ill at ease, charged, it seemed with an almost animal awareness of the impending storm	sight, emotions
night	closed down upon them, swift as a frigate's wing darkening the known world	sight
dawn	grim light	sight
wind	rushed in at them, screaming	touch, sound

islet of Tekoto	lay shrouded in darkness scarcely more than a ledge	sight
	palms . . . beckoned with their promise of life	sight

The Writing Experience

The discussion that resulted from this lesson released the children by allowing them to speak of "fear" and even say "I'm afraid." No stigma could be attached to "fear" because the hero of the book--something written down and in print for everyone to see--was a boy with a fear. The fear was justifiable, but it was a weakness nonetheless. A new world was revealed to the children. Comments like "I never knew that things like this were in books" and "I never knew this could be something people were interested in" and "Why would anyone want to read about someone else's fear?" were heard.

Q. DID YOU ENJOY IT?

R. 1) Yes, I did, but I was surprised too.

2) You mean, teacher, that when you are afraid you don't have to be ashamed to say it?

3) I'm not afraid of nothing. (Peer reaction to this remark was--"Oh, you're a story boy. You remember when jitter Bug ran after you? Boy, you got a short memory when you want to.")

4) I never thought I'd write about being afraid, but I guess if Mafatu was afraid of the sea, I can be afraid, too.

Q. YOU MAY HAVE THE REMAINDER OF THE PERIOD TO WRITE YOUR COMPOSITIONS.

[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 85-99.]

Explanatory Note for Lessons 7-11

The children discovered, after their work with Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry, that the emotions they experienced were not just common to Sarah Johnson, Cynthia Means, Ronald Saulter, Stanley Brooks, Sammy Wilson, Sandra Hall or Gylda Moore--they are felt by everyone, everywhere in this world.

The succeeding lessons illustrate, as the children said, "the feelings we have inside. We didn't know we could write about the feelings we have inside." Sammy Wilson said it another way, "I didn't know somebody wrote about a kid's fears until we had Mafatu."

Later models provided the pupils with subjects not commonly discussed among their group of friends. Their reaction was, "You just don't talk about those things, teacher."

The following comments were made by the pupils after the lessons presented during the next few weeks.

> "Dobry, even though he never said anything back to his mother, didn't really listen or follow orders. He didn't do as he was told."
> (Dobry by Monica Shannon)
>
> "Sarah felt lonely and nobody laughed at her. People were very good to her. The Indians just wanted her to get used to their ways."
> (The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh)
>
> "Poor Esther, the kids didn't understand that she had a right to be different without them laughing at her."
> (Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen)
>
> "Marya's unhappiness was caused by people--her teacher, not understanding her differences."
> (Marya by Marie H. Block)

Lesson 8

__Preliminaries:__ A list of difficult words and the selection from __Dobry__ by Monica Shannon were duplicated ready for distribution. Included with the selection was a colored map of Bulgaria and the surrounding areas. After the vocabulary discussion, each child was given a globe to examine. The model was read orally the next day.

Vocabulary

	__Difficult Words__	__Children's Definitions__
1.	stretch	to draw out
2.	elastic	to stretch, then goes back to normal shape
3.	gypsy bear	__Gypsies come and entertain the people before winter sets in, one act is the gypsy bear__
4.	Time	the past, the present, the future
5.	paved	cement, black top
6.	proud	to think well of one's self
7.	eaves	long edges on a house
8.	comb	red skin
9.	sprawled	laid flat and out wide
10.	crude	rough
11.	sketches	pictures
12.	Sari and Pernik	__names of two oxen__
13.	charcoal	used for drawing
14.	oxen	animals that do farm work
15.	gazing	looking

16.	stalls	shelter or house for animals
17.	shadows	shade
18.	muscle	part of the body
19.	flecks	little drops or spots
20.	outlined	drawing the outside form
21.	bewildered	surprise, not knowing
22.	icons	religious picture
23.	Maestro Kolu	a Macedonian (Greek) artist who makes fireplaces
24.	jamal	fire place
25.	Roda	mother's name
26.	stucco	cement with a sandy surface
27.	disturbed	bother, troubled
28.	cherished	blessed, treasured
29.	peasant	people who live in the country very far from city
30.	energy	strength, power
31.	centuries	many hundreds of years
32.	Beata	family pig
33.	Neda	shoemaker's daughter
34.	patience	to wait
35.	surpassed	to exceed, to excel, to do much better than ever before
36.	intentness	planning to do something
37.	placidity	calm, peace, peaceful, quiet
38.	Bulgaria	the country where Dobry lives
39.	Lfskovetz	a mountain village in Bulgaria

[NOTE: The underlined definitions were supplied by the teacher on the duplicated sheet. Although the place names Bulgaria and Lfskovetz do not appear in the model, they are helpful in explaining where Dobry lives and in the globe study.]

The globe study followed the vocabulary discussion. We found Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia, Romania and the Balkan Mountains. The village of Lfskovetz was not labeled, but the city of Sofia was clearly visible. We continued our search and found Greece, Turkey, the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. The children were quick to recognize that Constantinople was not on the map; Istanbul was in its place. Andrew McDaniel volunteered to investigate, and he searched reference books and reported that the name was changed in the 1920's to Istanbul. He added that the story therefore took place before the 1920's. Another child noted that since Dobry's village was in the mountains and away from Sofia, Dobry probably had never seen a big city. I concluded the period by saying, WE HAVE WORKED ON THE VOCABULARY AND HAVE DISCOVERED THE AREA IN WHICH THIS STORY TOOK PLACE. TOMORROW WE WILL READ DOBRY. WE WILL BE ABLE TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THESE PEOPLE AND THIS LAND.

Selection

Introductory remarks: Dobry was a boy a few years older than you, who lived in a small mountain village in the Balkan Mountains. He lived with his mother and grandfather on their small farm. They made their living from the land, just as Mafatu and his people depended on the sea. Dobry and Mafatu had something else in common. Their parents, Mafatu's father and Dobry's mother, were concerned with the life their sons would lead when they had grown into manhood.

Q. MAFATU'S FATHER WAS DESCRIBED AS?

R. grim and silent

Q. RODA, DOBRY'S MOTHER IS ALSO SILENT, BUT NOT SO GRIM. WHAT DO ALL MOTHERS WANT FOR THEIR CHILDREN?

Sammy: I suppose they want their kids to be good and learn to be something good like a mailman, or mechanic or something. But I know a lady, Miss Tate, who beats her kids if they don't steal; she even beats them if they don't do garbage picking. She is a wine-head. So don't say all mothers.

Q. PERHAPS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND MISS TATE'S PROBLEMS, SAMMY. MAYBE THINGS JUST LOOK THAT WAY TO YOU.

R. Don't say that cause everybody knows about those Tate kids; they are trouble and you've got to stay away from them.

Q. DO YOU THINK RODA WAS LIKE MISS TATE?

R. 1) No, she probably wants him to be something good.

2) But I'll bet she wants him to be something he doesn't want to be.

Q. WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

R. Because all mothers don't always know what the kids want. It's always what they want.

Q. I BELIEVE YOU UNDERSTAND DOBRY AND HIS MOTHER EVEN BETTER THAN THEY DO THEMSELVES.

"A day usually seems a very long time to Dobry;..." to "...a shirt woven, cut out, but not made up."

The complete model will be found on pp. 79-81 of Dobry by Monica Shannon (New York: The Viking Press, 1934).

Discussion

The model was read aloud by the pupils and led to the following discussion.

Q. (I read) "A DAY USUALLY SEEMED A VERY LONG TIME TO DOBRY; EACH HOUR BIG, ROUNDED OUT WITH WONDER. AND ALWAYS BEFORE THIS WHEN HE HAD SOMETHING AS EXCITING AS THE GYPSY BEAR TO EXPECT DAYS WERE ABLE TO STRETCH THEMSELVES OUT AS IF TIME WERE ELASTIC AND ONLY SNAPPED BACK INTO PLACE, BECAME MUCH SHORTER, WHEN HE LOOKED BACK." WHICH DAYS OF THE WEEK ARE LONGER THAN OTHERS?

R. 1) They are all twenty-four hours long.

2) Oh! School days seem longer and sometimes Wednesday and Thursday seem the longest.

Q. HOW DO SATURDAY AND SUNDAY COMPARE TO MONDAY OR WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY?

R. Saturday and Sunday are very short.

Q. WHY?

R. Because there is no school and I can play all day.

Q. AND WHAT DAYS ARE THE LONGEST DAYS OF THE YEAR FOR YOU?

R. 1) The day before Christmas.

2) The day before my birthday.

3) The day before the last day of school.

Q. NOW READ AGAIN "A DAY USUALLY . . ." TO "WHEN HE LOOKED BACK."

R. "Days were long, but the time before the gypsy bear came was very long, just like waiting for Christmas. But when he looked back, the time was short, like Christmas day."

Q. WHAT IS DOBRY DOING IN THIS SELECTION?

R. He is drawing.

Q. HOW DOES TIME PASS NOW?

R. Fast, because he is busy doing something he likes.

Q. WHO DID WE MEET THAT WANTED TO MAKE THE ROAD LAST LONGER?

R. Jody.

Q. WHAT COULD DOBRY DO FOR HOURS, YET FOR HIM THEY WERE ONLY MINUTES?

R. "Lying on his back in the poplar leaves that paved the courtyard watching the family rooster."

Q. WHAT WAS DOBRY DOING MOST OF THE DAY?

R. Watching things and drawing these things.

Q. WHERE DOES HE DRAW WHEN HE IS IN THE HOUSE?

R. On the floor in front of the jamal.

Q. DID WE MEET A MOTHER WHO WOULD NOT APPROVE OF PICTURES DRAWN ON HER FLOOR?

R. Yes, Marly's mother.

Q. WHAT DID HE ENJOY DRAWING?

R. 1) Everything he saw he drew.

2) He drew animals.

3) He was going to draw his mother and grandfather, too.

Q. WHAT DID HE ENJOY DOING MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE?

R. Watching things first for a long time and then drawing them.

Q. HOW DO WE KNOW HE WATCHED THINGS?

R. 1) He saw the muscles in the animals' necks.

2) He saw the flecks of light in their eyes.

3) He saw the ways of the family rooster, too.

Q. WHY DIDN'T MOTHER SCOLD HIM ABOUT THE PICTURES ON HER CLEAN FLOOR?

R. She was bewildered by it all.

Q. WHY WAS SHE BEWILDERED?

R. 1) Because she had never seen pictures before.

2) She saw only icons at church, and she saw Maestro Kolu's pictures that were on jamals.

3) No one drew pictures there.

Q. WHY DIDN'T THEY DRAW PICTURES IN THAT VILLAGE?

R. Probably they didn't have time; they always worked.

Q. WHAT DOES MOTHER SAY TO HERSELF?

R. "What has come over Dobry? He thinks of nothing, but making pictures. I can't imagine!"

Q. DOES SHE PUNISH HIM?

R. No.

Q. DID IT BOTHER HER TO SEE HIM DRAWING ALL THE TIME?

R. Yes, "It disturbed her because Dobry had seemed a more cherished piece of herself and such a thing as making pictures would never occur to Roda."

Q. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN--"DOBRY SEEMED A MORE CHERISHED PIECE OF HERSELF AND SUCH A THING AS MAKING PICTURES WOULD NEVER OCCUR TO RODA."

R. She would never dream about drawing so why should he.

Linda Booker: Teacher, what does it mean when it says, "Dobry seemed a more cherished piece of herself"? Now I know how she got him; he came from her, but why is it called "a more cherished piece of herself"?

Q. LINDA, WHAT DID YOU SAY TO YOURSELF WHEN YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER ASKED YOUR MOTHER FOR MONEY, AND SHE GAVE HIM A DIME, AND YOU ASKED IMMEDIATELY AFTER AND SHE SAID NO. LATER, HOWEVER, SHE GAVE YOU FIFTEEN CENTS TO SPEND ON CANDY?

R. Well, I said she thinks he is so special because he gets everything he wants. But after awhile I got money too.

Q. SANDRA KEYS, WHAT DID YOU SAY WHEN YOU WROTE ABOUT A NEW BABY IN YOUR FAMILY?

R. I said my mother thinks her baby is so special, but when it was older, she treated all us kids the same.

Q. BOTH OF YOU HAVE USED THE SAME WORD TO DESCRIBE YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER AND SISTER. WHAT IS IT?

R. Special.

Q. YOU BOTH WERE MISTAKEN ABOUT ONE THING, YOU THOUGHT ONLY THE YOUNGER CHILDREN IN YOUR FAMILIES WERE SPECIAL. EACH AND EVERY CHILD IS SPECIAL TO HIS MOTHER.

DOBRY WAS SPECIAL, TOO. RODA HAD SO MUCH LOVE FOR HER SON THAT SHE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THAT A CHILD OF HERS, RAISED BY HER LOVING HANDS, COULD THINK OF DRAWING. SURELY, HE WOULD BE LIKE HER--HE WOULD HAVE NO TIME FOR PICTURE MAKING IF HE WERE LIKE HER. UNTIL NOW SHE THOUGHT THEY WERE ALIKE IN IDEAS, BUT NOW THIS CHILD SHE LOVES SO DEARLY IS SOMEONE SHE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND.

AT THIS MOMENT SHE REALIZES SOMETHING, WHAT IS IT?

R. 1) Her son is a stranger to her.

2) "For the first time in his life he became a stranger to his mother."

Q. WHAT DOES MOTHER SAY TO DOBRY?

R. "Dobry, now you are a little peasant, but the big peasant you must grow up to be will have no time for picture making. Don't you know that? The fields are there and what are fields without a peasant to give them the energy of all his days and the thought of all his nights? These fields have been handed down over so many centuries that nobody knows whether we belong to them or they belong to us."

Q. WHAT IS SHE TELLING HIM?

[NOTE: The word "peasant" had to be explained. It seemed several of the children thought it meant stupid or ignorant. We explained it was a word to identify his life--a man that worked with the land.]

R. You are born a farmer and you must be a farmer, so don't waste time drawing.

Q. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? "THE FIELDS ARE THERE AND WHAT ARE FIELDS WITHOUT A PEASANT TO GIVE THEM THE ENERGY OF ALL HIS DAYS AND THE THOUGHT OF ALL HIS NIGHTS."

R. Well, the land is there, and it is good, and it is good that you work in them like the family.

Q. AND THIS? "THESE FIELDS HAVE BEEN HANDED DOWN OVER SO MANY CENTURIES THAT NOBODY KNOWS WHETHER WE BELONG TO THEM OR THEY BELONG TO US."

R. We owned them a long time.

Q. ARE WE THE RULERS OF THE LAND OR DOES THE LAND RULE US?

R. Yes, we are rulers; we have stores.

Q. WHO FILLS THE STORES?

R. 1) can companies

2) food companies

3) butchers

Q. WHAT IF THERE WERE NO FOOD IN OUR STORES? WHAT WOULD WE DO?

R. We would go to the country and live.

Q. OH, AND WHAT WOULD YOU DO THERE?

R. Kill animals and eat.

Q. WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS WOULD YOU KILL FOR FOOD?

R. Cows, chickens, pigs.

Q. THESE ANIMALS DEPEND ON PLANTS FOR FOOD.

R. Well, then, we have to eat other animals that don't depend on plants.

Q. ANIMALS WHO DON'T EAT PLANTS, EAT ANIMALS WHO DO EAT PLANTS. INDIRECTLY THESE ANIMALS DO DEPEND ON PLANTS FOR FOOD. IN A WAY, THIS IS SIMILAR TO A SECOND HAND CAR. THE FIRST OWNER USES IT AND DECIDES HE WANTS A NEW CAR. THE PERSON WHO BUYS THE CAR IS NOW THE SECOND OWNER AND THE CAR IS NOW SECOND HAND. THE SECOND OWNER MAY NOT APPRECIATE THE CAR AS IF IT WERE NEW, BUT HE GETS SERVICE. IT TAKES HIM WHERE HE WANTS TO GO AND BRINGS HIM BACK. TELL ME, ARE WE DEPENDENT UPON THE LAND?

R. Yes, we are. We don't do the work in the fields because we can buy the things the land grows.

Stanley: I think I'll eat fish from now on.

Q. GOOD, FISH EAT PLANTS OR THEY EAT OTHER FISH THAT HAVE EATEN PLANTS.

Stanley: I guess we need the land more than we thought--even the land under the water.

Q. WHY IS MOTHER SO PATIENT WITH DOBRY?

R. 1) Because she knows she doesn't understand him.

2) If she hollers, he'll get worse.

3) Mother was a very patient woman, instead of hollering or beating Dobry into working in the fields, she waits and says nothing.

4) Her patience is so great that the author compares it to Mother Nature . . . who is supposed to be very patient. Well, like everything in its Time. I have to wait for my road racing set because it's not Christmas and it's not my birthday and it costs too much money to get it for no special reason.

5) But just because you wait, doesn't always mean you'll get what you want either.

6) So his mother will have to just wait and see.

Q. HOW IS MOTHER DESCRIBED?

Mother	looked down at the charcoal pictures outlined on her clean floor and felt bewildered
	had never seen anyone draw before
	thought the floor looked better with oxen heads all over it, yet . . .
	disturbed
	Dobry seemed a more cherished piece of herself and such a thing as making pictures would never occur to Roda
	for the first time in his life (Dobry) became a stranger to his mother
	you are a little peasant, but the big peasant you must grow up to be will have no time for picture making
	said nothing
	her patience was only surpassed by that of Mother Nature--with whom she shared the same intentness of purpose--but a deep placidity as natural to her as breathing covered up everything
	she said, "children grow out of more things than clothes"
	a boy is a shirt woven, cut out, but not made up

Q. WHAT'S MOTHER NATURE'S PURPOSE?

R. To watch things grow.

Q. IS DOBRY'S MOTHER'S PURPOSE THE SAME?

R. Yes, to watch him grow up.

Q. GROW UP TO BE WHAT?

R. Grow up to be a big peasant and work in the fields like everyone else.

Q. WHAT DOES "BUT A DEEP PLACIDITY AS NATURAL TO HER AS BREATHING COVERED

UP EVERYTHING IN RODA" MEAN?

R. Well, placidity means calm, peace, quiet, peaceful, so she must have been a very calm, quiet person, and she just acted as if nothing was wrong.

Q. BUT WHAT DOES SHE THINK?

R. She is worried because she may not get him to work the fields.

Q. WHAT DOES SHE HOPE FOR?

R. She hopes he will grow out of making pictures like he does his clothes.

Q. WHY DOES SHE COMPARE A BOY TO A SHIRT THAT IS WOVEN, CUT OUT, BUT NOT MADE UP?

R. The boy is like the material that's not made up. He can grow up but he doesn't have to be what the parents think is good for him. He could be an artist.

Q. TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT DOBRY. WAS HE WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL A GOOD BOY?

R. 1) Yes, I suppose he was, but he wasn't doing what his mother wanted him to do.

2) He wasted time.

3) He was wasting time, but he was always looking at things.

Q. WHAT THINGS?

R. The things that were around him--the leaves, the trees, the animals and his mother in the fields.

Q. WHEN YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING YOU LIKE, FOR EXAMPLE, DOBRY AND HIS DRAWINGS, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE IT IN ONE WORD?

R. "absorbed" (This word is from the model.)

Q. HOW WOULD TIME PASS?

R. Quickly, like a rubber band it stretches and then it snaps and then its over.

Q. HOW WERE DOBRY'S DRAWINGS DESCRIBED?

R. 1) Charcoal pictures outlined on the clean floor.

2) Crude sketches.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHETHER THE BOY HAS ANY TALENT?

R. No, it doesn't say.

Q. IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO KNOW AT THIS TIME WHETHER HE IS TALENTED?

R. No.

Q. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN THIS SELECTION?

R. 1) That mother realizes her son is a stranger.

2) That for the first time in her life she sees pictures drawn.

3) She likes pictures, but they shouldn't be done by Dobry because she thought she knew what he should be doing.

4) She knew what he should be, but Dobry didn't.

5) Dobry was growing up.

6) She was patient as only Mother Nature is patient.

7) And she wanted to see her only child grow up and be a farmer like the family.

8) Her son was growing independent of her.

Q. WHAT DOES YOUR MOTHER WANT YOU TO BE?

R. Anything I want, but not a bum or a guy waiting for a check in the mail.

Q. WHAT DOES DOBRY SAY WHEN SHE TELLS HIM THAT HE MUST GROW TO BE A BIG PEASANT?

R. 1) He doesn't answer.

2) He is too busy drawing.

3) He ignores it.

4) He just says he'll make her a picture on the bread box. He is

sweet-talking her.

5) He'll draw her and grandfather working in the fields.

6) See, he doesn't put himself in, just the old people.

7) No that's not it; he always watches things while he draws them--like a real artist.

Q. WOULD YOU BE HAPPY WATCHING THE THINGS ABOUT YOU AND THEN DRAWING THEM?

R. 1) No, I'm too busy running around.

2) He is different; he likes to do those things.

3) Well, I think you have said it--he's different.

Q. DIFFERENT FROM WHOM?

R. 1) From everyone he lives with.

2) You know Mrs. Nesper, this Dobry could get into a lot of trouble with his mother. He doesn't listen now, so what will he do when he is older?

3) But, he doesn't talk back.

4) No, but he doesn't listen either. He ignores her and he tries to sweeten her up by telling her that he'll draw a picture of her and grandfather in the field.

The Writing Experience

(1st day)

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN IN TROUBLE RECENTLY--SOMETHING THAT INVOLVED YOU AND YOUR MOTHER?

R. Wow, we wrecked a car into a lady's garage.

Q. HOW DID YOUR MOTHER GET INVOLVED IN THIS ACCIDENT?

R. Well, we found this junk car, and we pushed it down the alley, and it hit the garage. The lady called the police, and the lady called my mother. So when I got home my mother knew about it. She just said I'd have to pay her back for the damages.

Another child: I got into trouble at school once and my mother didn't hit me like the teacher thought. She just told me not to do it again, but when she was talking to the principal and my teacher, she just listened and said yes.

Q. WRITE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND YOUR MOTHER, I'LL BE INTERESTED TO READ YOUR PAPERS.

[NOTE: The compositions, written during this period tried to show mothers' reactions to their children's problems. It is interesting to note the inconsistency in parental discipline within some homes. A violent act of belligerence may be passed off with little or no comment; or the parent may punish the child with an extension cord and vow "I'll guarantee he'll never do it again."]

(2nd day)

The next day we discussed the model again. I wanted the children to better understand Dobry and Mother in terms of their own experiences. The model was reread out loud, and I placed the names Dobry and Roda, his mother on the chalkboard.

Q. WHAT DO THESE TWO PEOPLE MEAN TO YOU? WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS DOBRY?

AND WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HIS MOTHER? (The following descriptions were recorded on the chalkboard by the class secretary.)

Dobry	Roda, his mother
artistic	practical
He appreciated things that could be felt inside. His emotions were his ruler.	Only the land was important, that's what she was taught and that's what she hoped to teach Dobry.
	She believed in working hard with your hands, but it had to be in the fields. She didn't understand that Dobry's drawing pleased him (like our stories please us).
	She didn't understand that as the land pleased her, Dobry's pictures pleased him.

Q. WHEN TWO PEOPLE DISAGREE OR MISUNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, WHETHER THEY SPEAK SOFTLY OR SCREAM AND HOLLER, THEY HAVE PROBLEMS. WHAT IS THIS PROBLEM CALLED?

R. 1) fight

2) trouble

Q. IF DOBRY HAS ONE IDEA AND MOTHER HAS ANOTHER IDEA ABOUT THE SAME THING, WE CAN CALL THIS A CONFLICT--A CLASH, OR A DISAGREEMENT OF IDEAS. MOTHER THINKS ONE WAY, AND DOBRY THINKS ANOTHER WAY.

FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE YOU HEARD OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARGUE WITH YOUR MOTHER OVER MONEY, THE LENGTH OF SKIRTS, TIGHT PANTS, FRIENDS, PARTIES, THE TIME THEY MUST BE HOME EVERY NIGHT?

R. (The class laughed.) Oh, Mrs. Nesper--have we!--Even worse than that.

Q. IF THE CONFLICT WAS BETWEEN YOUR MOTHER AND SOMEONE ELSE, HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT IT?

R. Well, I was there.

Q. IF YOU WERE THERE AND SAW THE ARGUMENT, YOU COULD COME AND EXPLAIN IT ALL TO ME. HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN IT?

R. I'd tell you or write it down.

Q. WHAT IS ANOTHER WORD FOR TELL?

R. 1) speak

2) talk

3) report, like the patrol boys do

Q. YES, YOU WOULD SPEAK OR TALK BUT YOU WOULD REPORT IT TO ME. YOUR WORK THEN IS TO BE A REPORTER, TELL THE FACTS, INCLUDE THE DETAILS, AND MAYBE ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS IF THEY WILL BETTER EXPLAIN THE STORY.

NOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO WRITE YOUR STORY LIKE A REPORTER, BUT IF YOU ARE WRITING ABOUT A CONFLICT BETWEEN OTHER PEOPLE, YOU MAY WANT TO TELL THE STORY AS YOUR TWO EYES SAW IT.

[NOTE: The compositions for this lesson have been placed in the same series. To distinguish the first day's composition from the second day's I have placed them in chronological order and numbered them i and ii. If a child wrote on one day only, the heading 1st day or 2nd day is used to designate which day the child wrote. The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 100-123.]

A Film: An Experience in Observation

Preliminaries: The film, "The Seasons" produced by the Enco Corporation was obtained through Modern Film Services and was shown on May 7, 1965.

Background: One of my co-workers said, "Mrs. Nesper, I don't know if you have started work on poetry, but I think you would be interested in this film. Perhaps the scenes may motivate your class into writing poetry.

I felt I should capitalize on this opportunity, but questioned the value of the film for producing the effects my friend believed would develop as a result of the presentation.

Since I had no time to preview the film, I was not sure how to introduce the film.

Procedure: I said, "Boys and girls, I want you to sit back and enjoy this movie, filmed in color, of our countryside during the four seasons. Perhaps you will see things that will please you. Perhaps you will see places similar to ones you yourself have visited. There is very little talking in the film. You will hear music during the entire film as a pleasant background for the scenes you will soon see on the screen.

(The film was about twenty minutes in length, but after eight or nine minutes, I saw the youngsters moving away from the movie screen. Sammy said, "Could I wait outside until this movie is over?")

I stopped the projector and said, "You know, I've seen things in this film that remind me of the models we have had in English.

R. You have? Where?

Q. WHERE? WHY RIGHT IN THE FILM.

R. Well, I didn't see anything.

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING? (Of course they had, but they didn't know what they were looking for. All they needed was a hint, the word "model" obviously was exactly what they needed to arouse their interest.) I'M GOING TO SHOW THE REST OF THIS FILM, AND I WANT YOU TO TELL ME WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT REMINDS YOU OF OUR MODELS. (The following are the things they saw and mentioned.)

Scene	Comments
a bee on a flower	"the bees burrowed into the fragile clusters of blooms" "the black and gold bodies" Jody, from The Yearling
a leaf floating down a tiny stream after a rain	"The sticks that floated in the gutter after a rain storm," I don't know the model but it described berry--Cranbury. Note: The children looked into their duplicated materials and found Cranbury was in the selection from Pinky Pye.
birds and tree tops	from Rabbit Hill when they talked about the birds in the orchard
muddy land with deep ruts cut by running water	from Miracles on Maple Hill when Annie-Get-Your-Gun came after Marly and Joe
a tree covered in ice and the camera focused on the branches and tiny twigs	That must be what the woman saw when she wrote about the tree outside Marly's bedroom window in Miracles on Maple Hill. "the branches and twigs were spun threads"

the camera followed a path into the deep snow packed forest	that's what Joe saw when he went out on his secret adventure and motioned to Marly to "shut up" from Miracles on Maple Hill Joe wore a heavy coat, green ear muffs and boots that could also be the way Dobry saw the roads in the mountains in winter
a forest in mid-winter after a snow storm	that's the woods in Miracles on Maple Hill--maybe at "sugaring time"
there were many shots of various forms of ice on the sea and in the woods	I asked, WHICH ONE OF THE CHARACTERS DID WE MEET THAT COULD LOOK THAT LONG AT PIECES OF ICE? 1) Dobry because he was always looking at things 2) Don't forget Jody, he slowed down to make the road last longer, and when he got to the top of the hill he looked at the land before him.
a scene of the rolling sea	that's Mafatu--no wonder he was afraid of the sea--the sea muttered and pounded and threatened, from Call It Courage
sea gulls on the shore	Mafatu must have seen things like this all the time.
storm coming over the ocean	Mafatu when his mother was trying to sail the "fragile craft"
heavy dark clouds covering the sunlight	"grim morning, sharks circling, circling" when the fishermen found him and his dead mother
leaves blooming in spring	Dobry as he lay stretched on his stomach and watched and watched

The comments when the movie was over could be summarized: This is what the authors must have seen when they described things in their books. Each description came alive for the youngsters.

Conclusion: Eight children raised their hands and said, "Mrs. Nesper, Miss Moran broke this class up this morning and we went to another room. The teacher showed that film this morning.

Q. WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO BEFORE?

R. Well, we thought we could get out of work for a while; after all everyone didn't see it. But, the other teacher didn't teach it that way.

Q. HOW DID HE PRESENT IT TO YOU?

R. Well, he just showed it and said, "Aren't those birds nice . . ." and "Look at the sky."

Q. DID HE TALK THROUGH THE ENTIRE FILM?

R. No, just what I told you.

Q. TELL ME, WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF IT THIS MORNING?

R. Nothing.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THIS AFTERNOON?

R. 1) Well, after you said it reminded you of some models, it was very interesting to me.

2) I could see what the author was trying to describe.

Q. I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER THIS FILM WAS NOT MADE TO GO ALONG WITH OUR LESSONS, BUT AS LONG AS THE SCENES WERE SIMILAR TO ONES WE HAVE READ, I THOUGHT WE COULD USE THE FILM THIS WAY.

R. Well, I really did like it this time.

Lesson 9

Preliminaries: I duplicated the vocabulary and two versions of the selection from The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh for distribution to the class.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	finished	complete or done
2.	wilderness	lost in woods; forest
3.	maple trees	tree that you get maple syrup from
4.	scarlet	color red
5.	chimney	something smoke comes out of
6.	promised	keep your word
7.	woodpile	fuel for fire
8.	neatly	everything in order, tidy
9.	stacked	on top of each other
10.	language	the way we communicate by mouth
11.	Stephen	name
12.	Hannah	name
13.	John Noble	name
14.	Tall John	name
15.	nodded	shake up and down
16.	brave, braver	courageous
17.	fetch	go get
18.	afraid	scared

19.	courage	to be brave
20.	tears	tiny drops of water from the eyes
21.	squaw	wife
22.	Thomas	horse's name
23.	stirred	moving
24.	mush	oat meal
25.	Guarding Hill	place where Indians stood guard
26.	cloak	long cape without sleeves
27.	wrapped	cover
28.	narrow	thin
29.	mounting	get upon
30.	solemn	to be very serious
31.	fingers	part of hand
32.	splashed	part of water
33.	shoulder	part of boy
34.	strides	steps or movement of feet
35.	strangest	odd or different
36.	darkness	dark, night
37.	tasted	the flavor of something
38.	enjoyed	to like something
39.	packed	put things away
40.	eagerly	can't wait
41.	magic	strange, unknown
42.	nightgown	a sleeping garment
43.	comb	thing for your hair
44.	puzzled	can't understand
45.	knelt	bent down on knees
46.	prayers	worship

47.	lonely business	being alone
48.	choked	can't speak, shook up
49.	Great Spirit	Indian's Spirit
50.	wasting	to throw away

Selection

Introductory remarks: Sarah Noble is a young girl at the time this country was being settled by people from Europe. The settlers lived in forts and as the country became safe from Indian attacks the settlers slowly moved out of the forts and built cabins. The men in the families were responsible for protecting their families in the wilderness.

John Noble, decided that it was time for his family to build a farm and a life away from the fort. He thought it was best that the family stay at the fort for protection until he found the land that would best suit his family's needs. The only exception was, Sarah Noble. Sarah accompanied her father, since she was the oldest child in the family. When Mother said her good-byes, she told Sarah, "Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble." And when Sarah became frightened, she remembered this advice. We meet John and his daughter, Srah after the little house is finished.

Version 1: (with deletions to be filled in by the students)

A passage from The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh, beginning "In the fall of the year the house . . ." and ending

". . .the first time she had said the word out loud," was printed with all objects removed.

(source for this model is cited on p. 128 of this lesson)

Procedure: After we had discussed the vocabulary, I distributed Version 1 to the class. The children were eager to do this exercise again as is shown in the brief discussion that follows.

Q. BEFORE WE GET INTO OUR MODEL, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ENJOY FILLING IN THE OBJECTS OR DETAILS THAT HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR.

Sandra: Oh, you mean what we've done for Jody. Goody, that was fun.

Q. I THINK PERHAPS YOU WILL BE ABLE TO READ THIS AND SUPPLY THE ANSWERS WITHOUT ME.

Stanley: (Reading.) "In the fall of the _______ the house was almost finished." Oh, the fall of the year.

Sammy: "A little house, very small in the wilderness, and small, too, beside the huge maple trees that looked down on it."

Q. WHAT'S ANOTHER WORD FOR HUGE, SAMMY?

Sammy: Big, large, giant, great, big.

Q. "HUGE" IS A FINE WORD AND SO ARE THE OTHERS YOU CALLED OUT. NOW YOU CAN USE HUGE OR YOU CAN USE THE WORD "GREAT." "GREAT" IS THE ONE THE AUTHOR USED.

Sammy: Use the one the author used because we'll get the full version, and they'll match.

Gylda: "The _______ was brown and the trees had put on their finest scarlet and yellow."

Q. WE KNOW WHAT THE TREES LOOKED LIKE, SO WHAT OTHER OBJECT ARE WE CONCERNED WITH RIGHT NOW.

Gylda: The house.

Harriet: "Sarah and her father, Tall John and Thomas all stood and looked at the house."

Ronald: "The big chimney promised warm _______ days and nights."

Q. WHAT KIND OF DAYS AND NIGHTS DO WE WANT TO BE WARMED?

Ronald: Cold, oh, winter, days and nights.

Michael: "Outside there was a woodpile, neatly cut and stacked. 'It's a good house,' said John Noble."

Q. I THINK YOU ARE ALL DOING SO WELL, THAT WE SHOULD DO THIS INDEPENDENTLY. READ THE REST OF THE SELECTION AND FILL IN THE ANSWERS. NOW IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWERS, JUST LEAVE THEM BLANK. (When the children completed the assignment, the selection was read aloud and a class secretary recorded the correct responses at the chalkboard.

Sandra Keys: "'Good,' said Tall John, who never used two *words* where one would do--even if he spoke in his own *language*."

Latricia: "'It is a beautiful house.' said Sarah."

Linda: "Her father did not *answer* her at once."

Kenzy: "Then Sarah's father took both her hands in his and *looked down* into her eyes."

Sammy: "'Sarah,' he said. 'You have been *brave*, and now you will have to be braver.'"

Stanley: How did you know that was brave, Sammy?

Sammy: Because how could she be braver if she wasn't brave first.

Lona: "'I must go to fetch your mother and the *children*. It is too far for *you* to go and it will be better if *you* stay here.'"

Q. YOU DID VERY WELL WITH THIS.

Cynthia: "'Stay here? Alone? I am _______.'" Oh, that's *afraid*.

Eldwin: "She heard herself say 'afraid' and it was the first time she had said the *word* out loud."

Q. THE HOUSE IS DESCRIBED AS SMALL, BUT WHAT DOES THE AUTHOR COMPARE THE HOUSE WITH?

R. 1) She compares it to the wilderness.

2) She compares it to the great maple trees that look down on it.

Q. WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS TALL JOHN?

R. He certainly doesn't talk much, but he must be friendly to have made friends with John Noble.

Q. WHAT KIND OF PERSON DO YOU THINK SARAH WAS?

R. 1) A good, hard working girl.

2) She misses her family.

Q. WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS FATHER?

"In the fall of the year the house...." to "....Small John, who was like his father in not wasting words."

The complete model will be found on pp. 33-41 of The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954).

R. 1) A hard worker

2) A worrier

3) A man with lots of things on his mind.

Q. TOMORROW WE WILL READ THE FULL VERSION OF THE COURAGE OF SARAH NOBLE AND WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT SARAH MUST EXPERIENCE.

Discussion

The model was read aloud by the pupils and the following discussion resulted.

Q. WHAT DETAILS WERE USED TO DESCRIBE TALL JOHN?

Tall John	stood and looked at the house
	"Good" (meaning the house)
	never used two words when one would do--even if he spoke in his own language
	nodded
	swung her up on his shoulder
	they went, with long strides, down the hill, across the river

> "She speaks with her Great Spirit . . .
> as we speak with our Great Spirit."

William: He was a very wise man. I suppose that's why Sarah's father left her with him.

Linda Booker: And his mouth would never let him get into trouble, like mine does for me.

Q. HOW WAS FATHER DESCRIBED?

Father	stood and looked at the house
	said "a good house"
	did not answer--looked at Tall John
	took both her hands in his and looked down her eyes
	there was worry in his mind
	was mounting Thomas
	rode quickly away--turning once, twice, three times to wave to a very small girl

Sammy: He had a job to do and he did it the best way he knew how.

William: He was a good father, but he wanted to bring his family to their new house and he couldn't be slowed down by her.

Linda Booker: Yes, but he brought her to that wilderness--it didn't seem to slow him down then.

Ronald: Well that's different he had to have company and he had to have someone cook for him.

Larry: Why would she have to go back to the fort only to come back and there was a good place for her to stay, anyway.

Q. HOW WAS SARAH DESCRIBED?

Sarah	stood and looked at the house
	she said, "It's a beautiful house"
	heard herself say "afraid"

"I've lost my courage"

tears

(she thought) the Indians were her friends. She loved Tall John and his squaw. But to live in their house--was quite another matter.

she knew, there would be no place for Sarah to ride

was quiet

stirred the mush for breakfast

stood, holding Tall John's hand, to watch her father start on his journey

wrapped lightly around her

her mind, always busy, was making pictures

fingers were cold in Tall John's hand and the tears she had been holding back splashed on her cloak

played with the children

friends have ways of speaking without words (Sarah thought)

found herself in the house with Tall John and his family

longed for her own family

the evening meal was not what Sarah was used to

liked cooking, but there were times when she tired of it. So she ate the food and enjoyed it.

open the bag she had packed neatly

put on the nightgown

combed out her long hair

long brown hair of Sarah's; it was like the silk on the corn in late summer knelt to say her prayers

said them aloud

tears came again, for it was a lonely business

said her prayers, her voice choked

asked herself--was it right to pray for Indians?

prays for the Indians too, and the Indians seem pleased

R. 1) She is lonely.

2) She is very pretty.

3) She is very neat and clean. Her mother must be clean, too, because she taught her.

4) In her own way she likes the Indians, but she doesn't feel right in their house.

5) She must be friendly, because the Indians and her get along good.

6) She misses her family and she is worried if she will ever see them again.

Q. IS THIS REASONABLE FEAR?

R. Yes, her father had to go a long way through the wilderness.

Q. HOW WERE TALL JOHN'S CHILDREN DESCRIBED?

Tall John's Children	Well they played with Sarah, and they didn't speak English so good.
	They watched her "eagerly" because they thought "magic" was going to come out of her bag.
	They were surprised to hear their names mentioned in Sarah's prayers, but when they found out what it was all about the one said "Good."

Stanley: I think this was a special kind of an Indian family and a special kind of American family. They took to each other just like that. Tall John's a very understanding man. He must know a lot about the settlers because his name was John and so was his son's and Mary was his daughter's name. But I got the feeling from Sarah that she wasn't so sure what the Indians do. Like she doesn't know if God takes care of Indians and she didn't seem to know how they ate their food. What did she think they were--after all, they are people.

Vanessa: Maybe her father forgot to tell her these things because he was too busy.

Sandra Keys: Maybe she played with them, but she didn't eat with them.

Q. SARAH ADMITTED SHE LIKED THESE PEOPLE, BUT SHE "MADE PICTURES IN HER MIND," ABOUT AN INDIAN ATTACK AND SHE COMPLAINED SHE LOST HER COURAGE AND SHE WAS NO LONGER BRAVE. WHAT WAS SHE REALLY TRYING TO SAY?

R. She was afraid of being left behind. She was afraid that her father would not come back for her.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT WAY?

R. Sure lots of times. My mother would say, "stay here until I come back" and I'd think she would forget me and leave me in the store.

Q. SARAH LIKED TALL JOHN AND HIS FAMILY, SO WHY WAS SHE UPSET?

R. Because her ways and their ways are different. They were okay as long as she could go to her father in the evening.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING INTERESTING ABOUT HER PRAYERS?

R. Yes, she prayed for Thomas the horse and for the Indians.

Q. WHY WAS SHE IN DOUBT ABOUT THE INDIANS?

R. Because she probably knew they believed in other things like the Great Spirit.

Q. WHO IS THE "GREAT SPIRIT"?

R. The name they used for their God.

Q. WHAT ARE SARAH'S PROBLEMS?

R. 1) She was lonesome for her family.

2) She felt like a stranger because she didn't know the Indian ways.

3) She was worried about her father, because he had to go a long way alone.

4) She was afraid that she would never see her father and family again.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER GONE THROUGH WHAT SARAH WENT THROUGH? WAS THERE A TIME WHEN YOU HAD TO STAY IN SOMEONE'S HOME BECAUSE YOUR PARENTS HAD TO GO SOMEWHERE? PERHAPS, YOU DIDN'T LEAVE YOUR HOME WHILE YOUR MOTHER WAS GONE, MAYBE A BABY-SITTER CAME TO LIVE IN YOUR HOME. LET US THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS OVERNIGHT AND LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN COME UP WITH TOMORROW.

The Writing Experience

The model was read to refresh our memories, and I asked the children if they had had similar experiences.

Stanley: I never went anywhere, but when my grandfather died, my aunt took care of us, and I didn't even know she was supposed to do it.

Ronald: My mother had to go to a funeral, and we had to stay over at my aunt's house.

Sandra: I think I'd like to just think for a little bit, Mrs. Nesper.

Sammy: When my mother had a baby she got very sick and my grandfather watched us.

Linda Booker: I stayed with my sister-in-law once, and I didn't like it, so I told her I was sick and I got to go home.

Gylda: I went to visit my relatives once, and I was very lonesome for my mother.

Linda Booker: After I write my story, I think I've got another one. So I guess I write two today.

[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 124-138.]

Lesson 10

Preliminaries: I duplicated the difficult vocabulary and the selection from Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen. I stapled a picture cover, duplicated from colored ditto masters, to the selection. The picture showed the two girls--Esther in her Amish clothing and Mary, a schoolmate with long curls, in a pink dress.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	Esther	girl's name, heroine
2.	scarcely	few, barely
3.	patiently	wait calmly, not in a hurry
4.	buggy	carriage
5.	pleasant	nice, happy, not mad, pleased, friendly
6.	entirely	all, everything
7.	uncomfortable	not comfortable, unpleasant, not good
8.	plucked	pulled out of entirely
9.	stretched	pull out of shape
10.	purpose	to think, suggest, command, reason
11.	felt	touched
12.	ashamed	shy, feel guilty
13.	glanced	short look
14.	laughter	sound made when you are happy
15.	sudden	fast, swift, not expected
16.	throat ached	pain in the neck
17.	scolded	to holler, to punish

18.	pounded	hit
19.	directly	straight or now
20.	instead	substitute or in place of
21.	suddenly	all of a sudden
22.	important	something very serious
23.	brushed	rub
24.	curl	not straight
25.	exactly	just alike, same
26.	milkweed pod	plant
27.	downy feather	very, very soft feather
28.	shiver	to shake with fear or excitement
29.	fingers	part of the hand
30.	tossed	to throw
31.	chased	run after
32.	squealed	noise to tell on someone
33.	whisper	talk low
34.	skin	the outside of the body
35.	plump	fat or round
36.	vanished	disappeared
37.	fluffy	soft

Selection

Introductory remarks: The family in this story belongs to a particular religious group that has some very specific ideas about the style of clothes, the ways of making a living, the means of transportation and the kind of education its people should have. The father in each family is the boss. He makes all the decisions. Esther is the heroine in this story.

Father had special visitors from the Pennsylvania Board of Education. The visitors warned father that he would be arrested and held in jail if he did not allow Esther to attend school. Father argued that Esther could read and write well because she was being taught at home. They asked what kind of books she used. When they heard "just the Bible," they said Esther had the right to be educated with more than one book. While the visitors tried to convince father that he was wrong, one of the visitors remembered that the Board of Education had had trouble with him years before. Father had kept his only son out of school so long that he eventually was taken to court. When the boy, Dan, went to school he learned many wonderful things. He questioned father about the way the family lived. Rather than explain things to his son, father slowly grew away from Dan.

Finally Dan went away, and father would not allow the boy's name to be mentioned in the house. Now he worried about Esther. If she was sent to school, Esther too would want to go away from home. However, father decided to send Esther to school; but he told her not to talk to or look at the other pupils, and he would not let her ride the school bus. Instead, on school mornings father drove Esther to school in his buggy and after school he drove her home.

"For days the school made Esther feel so tight..." to "... Esther thought many times a day."

The complete model will be found on pp. 49-51 of Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955).

Discussion

The cover picture so impressed the children with the contrast between the girls that they wrote on the pictures:

> Esther, member of a religious group called Amish, and this uniform dress is what she must wear.
>
> This is a school girl in a regular school dress, but she is not Amish.

The children drew a line between the girls and wrote OPPOSITE under the line. Sammy added: "Conflict, a difference of ideas." Ronald said, "I don't know this curly haired girl's name, but I'll call her the Pink Girl because she has pink on." (Ronald did not yet know that Esther called the same person The Pink Girl, and when he discovered this in the model, he was delighted with himself.) The model was read aloud by the pupils. A class secretary was selected to write down the descriptions of Esther, the teacher, the children in the class, Mary and Father. This exercise helped the children organize their ideas.

Objects	Descriptions
Esther	feel so tight and so terrible that she could scarcely wait until it ended
	could not wait
	did as Father had told her and never looked at the children

	glanced up, somebody was looking
	felt ashamed for them and looked at the floor
	wanted to laugh too, so her throat ached with laughter
	learned the laughter was unkind
	didn't know the laughing was at her until the girl in pink told her
	looked in surprise
	felt her face begin to burn
	when she touched Mary's hair it felt like a downy feather; (hair) so beautiful it made a shiver go through her fingers, and her heart suddenly beat very fast
	thought of Mary "How beautiful you are!"
teacher	kind enough
	wore colored shirts
	pleasant to look at them
	bones looked uncomfortable, showing at the wings of a plucked chicken, when she wrote on the blackboard
	voice stretched and broke in two
	scolded
	pounded on the desk
children in the class	not ashamed
	laughed, jumpy laughter
Mary	sitting directly in front of Esther
	turned around suddenly one day and said, "I'm not laughing at you! I wouldn't!"

	the most beautiful and important name in the whole world for a girl (thought Esther)
	skin as rosy as her dress
	hair that fell in little golden curls like wisps of silk
	wore pink one day and blue the next and yellow
	laughed a good deal
	tossed her hair when the boys chased her and squealed
	wore two small rings
	girls wanted to walk by her side and whisper with her
	her knees were pink
	plump legs were bare
	was like the pretty girls made of glass in shop windows
Father	sat patiently
	would not like her to be friends with Mary or even look at her.

Q. TONIGHT, LET US THINK OVER ESTHER'S PROBLEMS AND SEE IF WE CAN DISCOVER WHERE HER REAL TROUBLES ARE. IF YOU CAN REMEMBER A TIME WHEN YOU FELT LIKE ESTHER, TELL ME ABOUT IT TOMORROW.

The Writing Experience

Q. (The next day I began) HAVE YOU EVER TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER SCHOOL?

R. 1) No, never, this is the only school I've been in. (Few students had this reply for the question.)

2) Oh, yes, lots of times here and down south.

Q. DID YOU FEEL STRANGE OR OUT OF PLACE?

R. 1) Yes, until I was able to make some friends.

2) As soon as you meet some kids you don't feel so bad.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER FELT YOU WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CHILDREN?

R. 1) Yes, my mother didn't put on the same kind of shoes the other kids wore.

2) Yes, my grandmother made me dress up for school and the other kids weren't dressed so fancy.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER HELPED SOMEONE MAKE NEW FRIENDS?

R. 1) Yes, when a new kid came into the class, I'd tell them my name and they tell me theirs and pretty soon we talk and play together.

2) And I know some kids that came to me and played with me when I was new around the school.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN A CLASSROOM WITH A BOY OR GIRL WHO WAS A TROUBLE MAKER, AND YOU WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO HELP THEM BEHAVE IN SCHOOL?

R. 1) Yes I have once in awhile, and I usually got beat up for it. (This refers to a child breaking up and reporting a fight.)

2) You have to mind your own business if you want to stay out of trouble.

Q. WELL NOW, LET'S REREAD PLAIN GIRL AND FIND OUT IF ESTHER EXPERIENCES ANY OF THESE PROBLEMS. (The model was read aloud.)

R. 1) Gee, poor Esther, she had a father that was a problem.

2) But he had a right to do what he wanted, A King in His Castle--remember.

Q. DO YOU MEAN THAT THE RELIGIOUS GROUP THEY BELONGED TO CAUSED PROBLEMS?

R. 1) Well no and yes. They could believe what they want, but as long she had to go to school, they could have helped her by talking about school at home.

2) They could have told her what school and kids are like.

3) Maybe the teacher was kind, but she couldn't make the boys understand Esther. Maybe she couldn't handle boys.

4) There seems to be only one who wants to be her friend--Mary.

5) Mary is popular with everyone; why did she want to make friends with Esther anyway--who needed Esther?

6) Mary liked her, and maybe she even felt sorry that everyone was picking on her. Just like Sarah Johnson and Cynthia. Sometimes they fight and sometimes Sarah protects her.

7) Yes, but that's only sometimes

8) I don't see why they just couldn't see Esther as she was and be friends. So she's different, so what?

[NOTE: I believe that the review of characters from the models in the lessons was sparked by the allusion to the bond of friendship between Sarah Johnson and Cynthia Means mentioned in response number six above.]

9) Dobry was different, even from his own family but his mother said he was like a shirt that wasn't sewn yet. She was going to wait and see what was going to happen.

10) Mafatu was different in a way; he was afraid, but he faced it.

11) And when he was ready, not when the tribe was.

12) So that means Esther must see that she is different and face it too.

13) She needs some courage like good old Sarah Noble.

Q. DO YOU MEAN SHE HAS TO CHANGE HER BELIEFS?

R. No she doesn't but she has got to know that kids will look at her and laugh.

Q. DO THEY HAVE TO LAUGH?

R. 1) No they don't, Mrs. Nesper, but you know they will until their mothers or teacher tell them what's what about that outfit she wears.

2) She should expect things like this happening to her when she is away from her family.

Q. YOU MEAN SHE SHOULD GET USED TO PEOPLE LAUGHING AT HER?

R. 1) Well, she is going to have to know that if it does happen, it happens because people don't know anything about her and when they get to know her, they will be able to make friends.

2) After all, people are people no matter what they wear. They get hurt; they bleed; they get angry; they laugh--they are all the same inside.

Q. "INSIDE" WHAT?

R. 1) Inside is here (with hands over his heart)

2) He means our emotions are all the same no matter what kind of person we are on the outside.

3) I think it is like the time we had to teach Eldwin to stand up for his rights. We talked nice to him but that didn't work. So we had to tease him bad until he finally hit us, and we hit back, and he hit back. Now he knows how to take care of himself. That's something else I want to tell you, Mrs. Nesper. Eldwin has a girlfriend, and a big boy came to Eldwin's crossing-guard patrol post and wanted to fight with him about that girl. Boy that girl was just enjoying all this too. But anyway, he bullied that boy so good; the [illegible]ger guy walked away.

Q. YOU MEAN ELDWIN WON AN ARGUMENT WITHOUT HITTING THE BIGGER BOY?

R. Yes, that's what I said--you'd have been so proud of him. He is doing real well now.

Q. HOW DOES ELDWIN'S EXPERIENCE TIE IN WITH ESTHER'S PROBLEMS?

R. 1) Don't you get it? Eldwin and Esther were the same; they were lost for awhile. Esther didn't have any friends and the kids laughed and Eldwin didn't have any friends, and he didn't know what to do when the kids bothered him. On the inside they both wanted to be with kids that were friendly, but they didn't know how. The kids made their life miserable. I bet they hated school. The only difference is you told us how to help Eldwin, and we did a good job. Somebody has got to tell the kids about Esther so that she'll be like Eldwin. I am sure he has no trouble now.

2) Well maybe Mary will have to do for Esther as we all did for Eldwin.

Q. WHO CAUSED ALL THE TROUBLE FOR ESTHER?

R. 1) Her father for one and the kids for another and the teacher for another.

2) She is described like a plucked chicken, so I doubt if there is any hope for her (the teacher).

Q. DO YOU THINK HER FATHER COULD CHANGE?

R. Well, maybe--he doesn't want to lose Esther like he did his son.

Q. CAN A MAN CHANGE HIS WAYS?

R. In time, just like Dobry's mother--in time.

Q. BUT I THOUGHT ESTHER NEEDED HELP RIGHT NOW?

R. Well the last hope is Mary; Mary has to help her fast.

Q. DID ESTHER LIKE SCHOOL?

R. No she felt tight and terrible.

Q. WHY WAS SHE SO IMPRESSED WITH MARY?

R. 1) Because Mary was so different. She wore regular clothes and sox and shoes, and Esther only knew what her people wore.

2) Well I guess her father was right to worry--Esther is looking around and learning different things, and she may be like her brother and go off for good.

3) Well, I feel sorry for Esther--she must have felt strange. In fact it says the teacher was uncomfortable looking, but that's how Esther felt inside.

4) The kids were different; she was the only one that looked like that and only one girl felt sorry for her.

5) She was lucky one did, I remember that no one felt sorry for me for a long time.

6) Well, I think Esther may feel terrible in school, but she shouldn't think the other girl is so good. Everybody is the same, says my mother.

7) Maybe the teacher could have made things better for Esther if she got the boys quiet. She didn't know how to handle the boys too good.

8) I think nobody should feel sorry for anybody. She was different, but if they lived there those kids must have seen others like Esther.

Q. EACH OF YOU HAVE MADE SOME VERY INTERESTING COMMENTS ABOUT ESTHER'S PROBLEMS, BUT TELL ME--IS ESTHER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL, THE TEACHER, THE CHILDREN, BELIEVABLE?

R. Oh yes, that's how you feel--no doubt about that.

Q. SHE HAS SOME VERY STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT MARY. NOT ONLY DOES SHE THINK SHE IS BEAUTIFUL: SHE COMPARES HER TO CHINA DOLLS IN STORE WINDOWS. IS THIS REASONABLE?

R. 1) Yes, because she has never seen such a girl.

2) And because the girl is kind to her.

3) Brightly colored clothes seem to please her because she wears the same clothes all the time.

4) The color of skin gets her too because she is all covered up.

5) And the way hair feels is something else she likes because her hair is in her hat.

Linda Booker: You know something, teacher? I could remember when I was afraid of Jensen school, but I was afraid of this one too. I knew what to expect there and I didn't know what to expect here. But this is a better school because the kids don't pick on me as much as they used to.

Ronald: I can remember making friends for the first time here. It sounds easy now, but it wasn't then.

Stanley: Your mother always says you don't need friends if you got plenty of brothers and sisters to play with, but that's worse. You have got to have friends that are not your brothers or sisters. If you only play them, the kids laugh at you more because you don't have friends of your own. I never felt like Esther, but I have been in a class where there was a kid that must have felt like Esther. I never felt like the boys in Esther's class because I mind my own business.

Sandra Hall: I feel sorry for Esther and I think people should never make people unhappy--on purpose, I mean.

[NOTE: The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 139-154.]

Lesson 11

Preliminaries: I duplicated the difficult vocabulary and the selection from Marya by Marie Halun Block for distribution to the class.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	forehead	the part of the head above the eyes
2.	stylish	fashion, up to date
3.	Miss Fenton	name of a teacher, unmarried
4.	claim	own, or someone's right to won
5.	Esther	girl's name, friend of the heroine
6.	poised	able to carry your body gracefully well
7.	Mary Palenko	heroine, the name the teacher called Marya
8.	shyly	embarrassed
9	American form	change your ways
10.	astounded	surprised
11.	prefer	better choices
12.	titter	giggle, snicker
13.	Marya Katerina Palenko	heroine's name, not American form
14.	occasion	holiday, special time
15.	christened	baptised
16.	softly alight	candle light
17.	Mrs. Kostiv	married woman's name
18.	altar	at church, shape like a table
19.	Father Pelensky	priest

20.	grave	where someone is buried, serious, solemn
21.	sprinkled	lightly spread
22.	holy water	Baptising water
23.	pronounced	to say, to tell, to sound out
24.	serious	very important
25.	toast	touch glasses and drink
26.	landscape	the sight
27.	Joneses, Smiths and Websters	common last names
28.	Ralph Novacek	a boy in the heroine's class
29.	sank	go down
30.	hunched	bent over
31.	sheaf	bound together
32.	monitor	helper for a school
33.	brow wrinkled	lift eyebrows and your forehead wrinkles
34.	frown	sad face
35.	celebrate	have a party
36.	holidays	vacations
37.	Bohemian	national group
38.	Polish	national group
39.	reckoned	to reason, to think
40.	modern calendar	the one that we tell dates with
41.	Ukrainians	national group
42.	Russians	national group
43.	Greeks	national group
44.	feast	special meal, holiday meal
45.	special	something different
46.	according	agree

47.	Ancient Julian Calendar	used by Julius Caesar, 13 days later than our calendar
48.	lagged	fall behind
49.	result	what happened
50.	countrymen	people from the same country
51.	neighborhood	place where you live
52.	Clark Avenue	a street
53.	exactly	the same, alike
54.	raised	brought up, pick up
55.	Easter	a holiday
56.	account	statement
57.	silent	quiet
58.	launch	blasts off
59.	explanation	to tell
60.	interrupted	to understand, to break up
61.	naturally	surely
62.	instead	in place of, rather
63.	stupid	dumb
64.	swishing	moving back and forth
65.	steadily	no break
66.	Sweden	a country in Europe
67.	foreign	different
68.	discouraged	stopped
69.	accept	to take
70.	clever	smart
71.	outlandish	ridiculous
72.	Olga	girl's name

156-157-158-159-160

"The new teacher, Marya decided, was pretty...." to "...the American form of that name? she wondered."

The complete model will be found on pp. 24-29 of Marya by Marie Halun Block (New York: Putnam's and Coward-McCann, Inc., 1954).

Selection

Introductory remarks: Marya Katerina Palenko is a young girl about your age. She has a very interesting problem; her new teacher, Miss Fenton wants to call her Mary Palenko. The selection begins when Marya and her classmates meet Miss Fenton for the first time.

Discussion

The selection was read orally. Just as the reader had reached ". . . reckoned their holidays by the modern calendar" discussion broke out.

Sammy: Could this be true? Can this really be true? I just can't believe it.

Stanley: Say, don't interrupt, Sammy--let's finish reading.

Q. (When the story was finished, I asked Sammy a question.) WHY DID YOU ASK WHETHER IT WAS A TRUE STORY?

Sammy: Well, my gosh--it's terrible.

Ronald: I know what he thinks; he thinks a teacher couldn't do that.

Stanley: Yes, one teacher called Ronald--Ronald Slaughter.

Q. BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT SAMMY WANTED TO SAY. (Of course I did, but he would have to verbalize his ideas before we could discuss Marya.)

Sammy: Well, the only thing I can say is--it's ugly.

Stanley: But, this is true, this could have happened anywhere, couldn't it, teacher?

Q. YES, IT COULD, STANLEY--IN FACT SOMETHING SIMILAR TO IT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WAS IN THIRD GRADE. I'M NAMED AFTER MY GRANDMOTHER AND MY THIRD GRADE TEACHER WOULDN'T PRONOUNCE MY FIRST NAME, OSANNA, PROPERLY.

Sammy: Then that's it; it is so ugly that it has to be true. Truth is ugly because it's so real.

Stanley: (No one asked Stanley to read how the new teacher was described; this was his own idea.) This teacher is described as "pretty," "brown eyes, light brown hair, which she wore in a dip over her forehead and in two stylish puffs over her ears." Do you know what that means? It means there were two lumps over her ears, but there should have been lumps from ear to ear and all over her head.

Harriet: I don't understand her--her name is nothing special, Miss Fenton.

Q. LET US LOOK FURTHER IN THE SELECTION. WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS STORY?

Stanley: Well, I'll tell you what she does first. She calls out your name, and you get up when you hear yours.

Q. HOW DID MARYA SIT AND WAIT FOR HER NAME?

R. Sat poised, that means she was well mannered.

Q. AND WHAT HAPPENED WHEN SHE CAME TO MARYA'S NAME?

R. She couldn't pronounce it; so Marya said it for her.

Q. WHY DID MARYA WISH MISS FENTON HAD NOT MADE THE MISTAKE?

R. Because she was shy and embarrassed because the teacher didn't know her name.

Q. WHY WAS MARYA ASTOUNDED?

R. Because the teacher told her the American form of Marya was Mary and would she like to be called Mary.

Stanley: No, that teacher never once said Marya--she said, "Wouldn't you rather be called Mary?"

Q. WHY DID THE TEACHER CUT MARYA OFF WHEN SHE STARTED TO TALK--"MY GRANDMOTHER--"?

Sammy: Because she was stupid, she was young and plenty stupid, she didn't know nothing about nothing--she wouldn't let the kid finish telling about her name.

Stanley: Sure was dumb, but don't call her stupid.

Ronald: Just say she doesn't understand anything.

Sammy: If that's so, how come she cut her off again when she tried to tell that she had been named after her two grandmothers.

Q. WELL, SAMMY, MAYBE SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO CALL HER STUPID.

Sammy: Well, call a thing what it is--but if you want, I'll say she didn't understand because she was--stupid.

Q. WHY IS THERE AN EXPLANATION OF MARYA'S SISTER'S CHRISTENING?

R. 1) To show that the name you get is very important.

2) It's so important in Marya's family, they have a party; they go to church, and they toast the baby.

Q. WHY ARE WE GIVEN NAMES?

R. For identification.

Ronald: You should see all the whiskey and beer after my uncle's party--I found a beer bottle, and I drank from it. Wow! Was I sick.

Sammy: Well, that's no toast, boy.

Q. (I read) "NOT WHILE SHE WAS STANDING LIKE A ROCKY LITTLE HILL IN A BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE FILLED WITH ALL THOSE JONESES AND SMITHS AND WEBSTERS AND--THANK GOODNESS FOR RALPH NOVACEK." WHAT DOES SHE COMPARE HERSELF TO?

R. A rocky little hill

Q. "A BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE FILLED WITH ALL THOSE JONESES AND SMITHS AND WEBSTERS . . ." WHAT DOES LANDSCAPE REFER TO IN THIS SENTENCE?

R. (no reply)

Q. IF SHE IS THE ROCKY HILL IN THE LANDSCAPE, THEN THE LANDSCAPE IS THE ___?___

R. The class. The kids in the class.

Sammy: Don't forget Margaret Johnson; she was in that class, too.

Q. "YOU MAY SIT DOWN NOW--MARY." IS THERE ANYTHING INTERESTING IN THAT LINE?

Stanley: Yes, she doesn't call her by her name; she keeps calling her Mary.

Sammy: And she tells Marya to sit down because she doesn't want to be bothered with her.

Q. READ THE NEXT PARAGRAPH, HARRIET. (Harriet read.) MARYA WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT HER FAMILY WOULD SAY IF THEY KNEW SHE WAS CALLED "MARY." WHY?

R. 1) Because if you tell at home what would happen? Your mother would tell the teacher and then everytime the teacher gets a chance she gets you.

2) She was nervous too--"Hands tightly folded and her shoulders hunched up."

Q. IF SHE DIDN'T FEEL LIKE MARY, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

R. She wouldn't answer to Mary.

Q. WHAT WAS THE ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PERIOD?

R. To write a story about Easter.

Sammy: See, I told you, she doesn't know anything. You can't write a story about Easter just because the teacher says, "Write me a little story about how you spent Easter Day."

Eldwin: How does the teacher know everyone celebrates Easter; everybody doesn't celebrate it.

Q. I'M AFRAID THIS NEW TEACHER DIDN'T THINK ABOUT THAT PROBLEM. WHY DOES MARYA SEEM TO HAVE TROUBLE?

Ronald: Because she moved out of the old neighborhood and in the old neighborhood people were like her. They celebrated the holidays together. In the new neighborhood she is the only one now.

Stanley: So why didn't the teacher let Marya tell about the calendars? You let us find out about them, but she didn't. Isn't she a teacher, too? I bet she didn't because she didn't know herself, and she didn't want anyone to be smarter than her.

Q. I'M SURE SHE KNEW ABOUT THE TWO CALENDARS, BUT THE AUTHOR DESCRIBED THE TEACHER AS "THE NEW TEACHER." PERHAPS SHE WASN'T JUST "NEW TO THE SCHOOL" MAYBE (Here Stanley cut in.)

Stanley: Miss_______ and Miss _______ were new to this school, but they were new teachers, too. Maybe Miss Fenton was real new, too. She told her to write about last Easter because she wanted to get rid of Marya.

Ronald: Yes, but she wanted all the stories on Easter. Marya writes a story, but even she doesn't like it because she is discouraged.

Q. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM HERE?

R. She wants to be part of the class. She wanted to fit in, just like Margaret Johnson.

Q. IF THINGS WERE BETTER FOR HER IN THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD WHY DID HER FAMILY MOVE AWAY?

Stanley: Well, take us for instance, we lived on the South Side; it was nice there; then we had to move here, but my mother said we'll soon be moving away because we are a little better now.

Q. BETTER HOW, STANLEY?

R. Oh, money, I guess.

Sammy: People stay here because they can't afford anything else, but when they can they go somewhere better. This is bad here.

Others: 1) So maybe her family moved because it wasn't a good place to live.

2) Maybe they couldn't stand all the noise or the fighting that went on.

3) Maybe the kids were all bad in the old place, and maybe the house was no good.

Q. PEOPLE MOVE FROM PLACE TO PLACE FOR MANY REASONS, BUT IT SEEMS THESE PEOPLE MOVED AWAY FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE ALL THE PEOPLE WERE FROM THE SAME BACKGROUNDS, SAME NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS INTO A NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE THERE WERE MANY KINDS OF PEOPLE, ALL DIFFERENT AND YET ALL THE SAME. FOR EXAMPLE, JODY, RUFUS, MAFATU, DOBRY, ESTHER, MARYA, SARAH, MARLY AND JOE--THEY ARE ALL CHILDREN FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND YET THEY HAVE MANY THINGS IN COMMON.

TOMORROW WE WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK CLOSER INTO THE DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGES THAT IDENTIFY MARYA AND MISS FENTON.

[NOTE: The model was reread aloud to refresh our memories. The first part of the period was used to search for and discuss the descriptions used by the author; the second part for writing.]

Q. THROUGH WHOSE EYES DO WE SEE THIS STORY? IS IT THROUGH MARYA'S, MISS FENTON'S OR THE AUTHOR'S? (The children reread the paragraph silently.)

R. 1) Well, it says "The new teacher, Marya decided, was pretty." If Marya were telling it, she wouldn't say Marya decided, she would say, I decided.

2) Would the teacher say about herself, "She had brown eyes and light brown hair?" No, she didn't tell the story.

3) It's got to be the author. She tells the story as she saw the characters.

Q. HOW DOES THE AUTHOR DESCRIBE MISS FENTON?

Miss Fenton	the new teacher
	was pretty
	brown eyes
	light brown hair
	wore (hair) in a dip over her forehead and in two stylish puffs over her ears
	wearing a suit of soft blue
	looking closely at the paper in front of her
	*(said) the American form of that name is Mary. Wouldn't you rather be called Mary?
	a puzzled look on her young face
	*You may sit down now--Mary
	standing in front of the class now
	brown eyes smiled
	I want you to write me a little story about how you spent Easter Day.
	picked up a sheaf of blank paper from her desk and handed some to each monitor
	eyebrows went up
	*Not had your Easter yet? What do you mean?
	*Two of them? How do you mean two of them?
	*interrupted Marya's thoughts

[NOTE: The starred descriptions were included by the children because they felt these lines described Miss Fenton's feelings about people who were different. The last, "interrupted Marya's thoughts," the children felt summed up Marya's problems with Miss Fenton, for the teacher interrupted poor Marya everytime. After examining the details further, the attitude of the class began to change.]

Stanley: Yesterday I kept saying the teacher didn't pronounce Marya's name. Well, I was wrong. She does on page 2--"Marya? Oh, yes, I see."

Sandra: I think there are some other things in these details that we didn't pay attention to before. It says, "the new teacher." New teachers here have trouble; so maybe she has trouble, too. It says she is good looking and stylish.

Gylda: It also says she looked hard at the paper in front of her; so maybe she really couldn't pronounce Marya's name. That happens here too.

Stanley: I have an idea about Miss Fenton; I think I know how to teach her a lesson in American forms.

Harriet: Before he starts that can I finish about Miss Fenton and the way she was described? You see here, it says her face--not any kind of face but a young face that looked puzzled. She must have been like Miss ______ and Miss ______ because they were young too, and they messed up lots of people's names when they first came here. She may be all right later on in the book because she never hollered, and it says her "brown eyes smiled."

Sarah Johnson: Oh, all she means to say is that the teacher's not so bad, maybe she'll learn from Marya later. But I want to know what [plan] Stanley's got for Miss Fenton.

Stanley: Well, when you get into trouble, you always hear "Put yourself in the other guy's shoes, and you won't do that again." So my idea is to put Miss Fenton is Marya's place.

Ronald: That's what I've said, treat others as you treat yourself.

Stanley: I wondered what Miss Fenton would do if she went to teach in Ukrainia or Russia or Greece. Maybe the principal would say, "Oh, the Ukrainian way of Fenton is Fentonko* or Fentonsky.* Wouldn't you rather be called by the Ukrainian form." And she'd say, "But, but my father's last name . . ." and he would stop her and say, "What's your father got to do with it?" (*The name endings came from Palenko and Pelensky.)

Q. PERHAPS SHE WOULDN'T LIKE IT, BUT SHE MIGHT FIND OUT HOW MARYA FELT. HOW WAS MARYA DESCRIBED?

Marya	sat poised, ready to stand up
	stood up
	"My name is Marya," she said shyly.
	astounded
	wanted to explain--it was important what name you were given
	could still remember the occasion when her little sister had been christened
	had had a little sip of homemade wine
	was standing like a rocky little hill in a beautiful landscape
	sank into her seat
	sat with her hands tightly folded and her shoulders hunched up
	didn't feel like Mary
	Marya's brow wrinkled into a frown--new trouble
	received her sheet of paper; she sat playing with her pencil for a long time

didn't know what to do

wanted to please the new teacher, do exactly as she asked

Mary stood up

knew she had made a mistake

stood silent

couldn't launch into a long explanation

sat down wishing she could hide

stupid of her not to have thought

wondered why--she felt different

bent her head and with difficulty wrote

discouraged, she stopped writing

she had been clever enough not to let Teacher know that her little sister had the outlandish name of Olga

she wondered

The Writing Experience

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU HAVE DISCOVERED ABOUT MARYA THAT YOU DID NOT KNOW BEFORE?

R. 1) I knew Marya wasn't a bad girl, and now I know it--she wanted to please the teacher above anything else

2) She was very shy

3) She felt she didn't fit in with the others, but she wondered why she didn't. She blamed the difference on her shyness, and her church rules and that her name was different.

Q. THE TEACHER WAS WRONG IN SEVERAL WAYS. IF THE TEACHER'S ATTITUDE WAS DIFFERENT, WHAT DO YOU THINK MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED?

R. 1) The teacher was wrong because she didn't know the kids' names in her class.

2) She didn't even know what kind of kids they were.

3) She didn't know how they talked. (That is, she was not familiar with the language the children used in their communication, like "signifying.")

4) She had no right to call her Mary; she should call her Marya.

5) She did not want to listen to the girl at any time. She didn't know about the modern calendar and the Julian calendar and the difference of thirteen days. If she did, she wouldn't let on that she did.

6) She made Marya feel "left out" instead of "fitting in."

7) She gave them a composition to write, and she didn't even think if the kids could do it.

Q. HOW COULD MARYA FEEL ACCEPTED BY EVERYONE?

R. If the teacher was different--if she listened and learned and taught things, her children were interested in.

Stanley: You remember last week when Ronald got into trouble, and you were mad, and I whispered to you that "it wasn't worth it" and you laughed? Well that's how the teacher could have learned, too.

Q. IS THERE ANY SIMILARITY BETWEEN MARYA AND ESTHER IN PLAIN GIRL?

R. 1) Yes, they both belong to religious groups that were different from the others in their class.

2) They both had trouble in school.

3) Esther's teacher was nicer, but she didn't know her kids any better. Miss Fenton made more problems for Marya than Esther's teacher made for her.

4) Esther had a friend she called The Pink Girl because she looked good in pink

5) And because she was so different from Esther

6) And Marya talked about Margaret Johnson "fitting in"

7) The kids "tittered" at Marya, and they laughed at Esther, but the meaning's the same. People were laughing at their differences.

Q. I'M GLAD YOU MENTIONED THAT, YES, THEY WERE LAUGHING AT THEIR DIFFERENCES INSTEAD OF SMILING AT THEIR SIMILARITIES. THIS REMINDS ME OF MISS FENTON'S AMERICAN FORM. WHO ARE AMERICANS?

R. Everybody born here.

Q. AND EVERYONE WHO TRULY WANTS TO BE A CITIZEN CAN BECOME A NATURALIZED CITIZEN. THAT MEANS THEY MUST MEET CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS AND TAKE AN EXAMINATION. RIGHT HERE IN THIS CLASSROOM WE HAVE A FEW GROUPS OF AMERICANS REPRESENTED. (I asked Sammy) WHAT GROUP DO YOU REPRESENT?

R. The Negro

Q. IRIS, WHAT GROUP DO YOU REPRESENT?

R. Puerto Ricans

Q. AND I REPRESENT ARMENIAN-AMERICANS AND MY HUSBAND WOULD REPRESENT POLISH-AMERICANS AND WE COULD GO ON AND ON. AMERICANS THEN ARE MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS.

WHAT WAS TRUE FOR MISS FENTON--LEARNING FROM HER CHILDREN--IS TRUE FOR EVERYONE. THE AMERICAN FORM, THE AMERICAN WAY IS ___?___

Ronald: Treat others as you would treat yourself.

Q. IT'S A COUNTRY WHERE WE LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER, OUR AMERICA. (The discussion revealed ideas the children were impressed with.)

THERE IS A LOT OF NAME CALLING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD EVEN IN THIS ROOM. SOME OF THE KIDS ARE MEAN AND CALL CYNTHIA--PORK AND BEANS BECAUSE SHE IS SO SKINNY. AND THEY CALL LINDA BOOKER--BOOGERMAN.

WHO CAUSES TROUBLE FOR THESE GIRLS?

R. Oh, the kids call them these names, and they get mad and fight.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, CHILDREN CAUSE OTHER CHILDREN UNHAPPINESS?

R. Yes, but teachers cause unhappiness, too. Like I reported a kid and the teacher told me to leave and stop bothering her room.

Q. ALL RIGHT, TEACHERS CAUSE UNHAPPINESS, TOO.

Harriet: I went to a birthday party where no one spoke much English, and that is really different. That takes a lot of understanding. I didn't understand anything, so I laughed when everyone else did. And some of the kids in this room have had their names messed up because some teachers couldn't say them good.

Q. YES, THAT WOULD BE TEACHERS CAUSING UNHAPPINESS.

I THINK YOU ALL HAVE THE IDEA NOW: I BELIEVE YOU WILL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH TIME TO BEGIN YOUR COMPOSITIONS.

[The children's compositions appear in the Appendix on pages 155-171.]

Lesson 12

Preliminaries: I duplicated the vocabulary and the selection from Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes for distribution to each pupil.

Vocabulary

	Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1.	ventriloquist	person talking with a false voice; voice seems to come from somewhere else
2.	unconsciously	not conscious, did not realize
3.	roused	stirred up, excited
4.	creminenty	exclamation of feeling or surprise, like wow!
5.	exclaimed	cry out loudly or with surprise or excitement
6.	Vox Pop	disk to place in mouth that changes the sound of your voice
7.	ventriloquize	to talk with a false voice as though voice is somewhere else
8.	fondly	gentle touch, light touch
9.	ecstatic	great joy, excitement, very happy
10.	whiz	qiick, skillful
11.	Minotaur	(children had recently read story in their reading books) the monster with the head of a bull which is confined in a maze
12.	echo	a repeated sound less strong than the first sound
13.	ventriloquism	being able to speak so the voice seems to come from somewhere else
14.	unfortunate	not fortunate; unhappy; unlucky
15.	experience	something that happened; an event

16.	resist	fight against; try not to give in to
17.	position	place, spot, arrange
18.	tongue	thing in the mouth; thin, moveable thing used in eating and talking
19.	porch	a covered room outside a house
20.	naturally	of course
21.	Hughie Pudge	a boy
22.	Boston wafer	a thin chocolate cookie
23.	pressed	squeezed, pushed
24.	frowned	disapproving look
25.	gesture	movement of part of the body--hand, arm
26.	suspicion	not believing, suspecting something
27.	reproach	blame, shame, disapproval
28.	arranged	placed, positioned
29.	bona fide	true, actual
30.	boldly	daringly, fearlessly
31.	squeaky	high, sharp cry, shrieking sound
32.	inkwell	ink holder; place to keep an ink bottle (pupils' desks have hole for an ink bottle)
33.	Miss Lumkin	teacher
34.	scrunching	folding up, collapsing, sliding down in his seat
35.	Superintendent	head of a school system
36.	Cranbury	town
37.	Mr. Pennypepper	Superintendent
38.	apparently	looked like; seemed like
39.	clinking	rattling sound, jingling sound
40.	ceiling	top of room--over head
41.	finally	at last

42.	suggested	hinted, considered
43.	possibility	something likely to happen, something that is likely to be true
44.	breath	a movement of the body to get air to live
45.	sucked	take in air loudly--with a sound and hold it a short time
46.	straight	tall, good posture, stand stiff
47.	interviewed	talk face to face, as to a person of importance; meeting
48.	certificate	an official paper
49.	scarlet fever	serious illness
50.	strap	a piece of leather for whipping
51.	disk	round, flat, thin like a Kennedy half dollar

Selection

Introductory remarks: Today we are going to read another story about Rufus M. In this story Rufus wants to be a ventriloquist and has all kinds of trouble. In class one day he tried using the Vox Pop--a disk to make your voice seem to come from somewhere else--and the teacher made him stand in the cloakroom. One evening later in the week Rufus's sister Jane and a friend were talking on the porch. I won't say any more now; let's read the story and find out what happens.

"Rufus is so funny...." to "...Mr. Pennypepper hung his strap. He was glad he didn't see it anywhere."

The complete model will be found on pp. 291-296 of Rufus M. by Eleanor Estes (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1943).

Procedure: The selection was read by the pupils and the discussion of the vocabulary with the children supplying definitions went smoothly. Only a few words like "ventriloquism," and "ecstatic" had to be looked up in the dictionary. The Minotaur story was familiar to the children from their reading. This part of the lesson was covered during one class period.

The next day we had visitors from Northwestern University--Professor Douglas, Mr. Stephen Judy and Mr. Carl Barth. To acquaint the children and the visitors I had each child introduce himself. The children were naturally pleased that the "Boss" from Northwestern had come to see them.

I read the selection aloud to refresh the story in the minds of the children and acquaint our visitors with the story. Then Sammy began rereading the selection with enthusiasm and humor. The children were especially responsive this day to the fun and suspense of the model.

During the rereading I reviewed various vocabulary words (like "ecstatic" and "ventriloquism") by brief questions interspersed among other questions about the details used in the model. As the model was reread we discussed the details and descriptions used by the author for Rufus, Miss Lumkin, Mr. Pennypepper, the class, and Mr. Pennypepper's office. A pupil acted as secretary and wrote the descriptions on the board as they were suggested by the rest of the class.

Discussion

Q. WHAT'S THIS STORY ABOUT?

R. 1) Rufus M.

2) he wants to be a ventriloquist

Q. WHAT'S A VENTRILOQUIST?

R. 1) a person who talks like his voice is over there

2) sounds funny--like Edgar Bergen and Charley McCarthy

Q. WHY DID RUFUS LEAP FROM HIS CHAIR "LIKE A BOLT OF THUNDER?"

R. 1) surprised to hear his voice

2) hadn't even known he'd said anything

3) thought he knew the secret of ventriloquism at last

Q. WHAT KIND OF MOVEMENT IS DESCRIBED BY "LIKE A BOLT OF THUNDER?"

R. 1) fast, quick

2) jumped up from his chair

3) crashing, stood up with a bang

Q. DID RUFUS REALLY MOVE "LIKE A BOLT OF THUNDER?"

R. 1) no, thunder is noise

2) but it is sudden, surprising

Q. THEN THIS DESCRIPTION IS ___?___

R. 1) a non-literal expression because he couldn't really be a bolt of thunder

2) a detail about Rufus

Q. SO IF RUFUS WAS NOT "A BOLT OF THUNDER" THIS IS NOT A LITERAL SAYING; IT IS A ___?___ EXPRESSION?

R. non-literal expression

Q. WHAT DID RUFUS FEEL AS HE WENT OFF TO BED?

R. tired and happy and almost ecstatic

Q. HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN ECSTATIC?

R. 1) very, very happy

2) he felt good

Q. THE NEXT DAY IN SCHOOL WHAT "UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCE" DID RUFUS REMEMBER?

R. 1) standing in the cloakroom

2) being punished for talking--trying to be a ventriloquist

Q. WHAT DID RUFUS PUT IN HIS MOUTH?

R. his Vox Pop

Q. WHAT'S A VOX POP?

R. a disk like a coin--to change your voice

Q. WHY DID RUFUS HAVE TO BE CAREFUL?

R. 1) the teacher might think it was candy

2) Hughie Pudge was looking and thought Rufus had a cookie

Q. EVEN THOUGH RUFUS REMEMBERED HIS "UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCE" HE TRIED VENTRILOQUISM AGAIN--WHY?

R. 1) he thought he'd learned how to use the Vox Pop and be a ventriloquist

2) he became brave thinking the disk would work

3) he was a "bona fide ventriloquist"

Q. HOW DID HIS VOICE SOUND?

R. 1) squeaky

2) high

3) like some funny little thing that got caught in the inkwell

Q. DID HIS VOICE SOUND "LIKE SOME FUNNY LITTLE THING THAT GOT CAUGHT IN THE INKWELL?"

R. no, the teacher knew it was him talking

Q. HOW DO YOU KNOW?

R. "the storm was gathering on Miss Lumkin's face"

Q. WAS IT?

R. 1) Yes

2) No, not really, but she was getting angry

Q. WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION DO WE CALL THIS?

R. non-literal

Q. HOW DOES THE AUTHOR DESCRIBE RUFUS?

R. 1) scrunching down into a small ball

2) uncomfortable

Q. WHO WALKS IN THE ROOM JUST THEN?

R. Mr. Pennypepper

Q. WHO IS HE?

R. 1) Superintendent of Schools

2) Superintendent of all Cranbury

Q. HOW DID THE AUTHOR DESCRIBE MR. PENNYPEPPER AS HE LISTENED TO MISS LUMKIN?

R. "He just stood there, rocking back and forth on his toes, clinking the coins in his pocket and looking at the ceiling."

Q. WHY COULDN'T RUFUS SPEAK?

R. Oh, he had the Vox Pop in his mouth

Q. WHAT DID MISS LUMKIN THINK WAS IN HIS MOUTH?

R. candy

Q. HOW WAS THE CLASS DESCRIBED WHEN MISS LUMKIN TOLD RUFUS TO PUT WHAT HE HAD IN HIS MOUTH IN THE WASTEBASKET?

R. 1) the whole class held its breath

2) everybody was glad he was not in Rufus's shoes

Q. HOW WAS THE CLASS DESCRIBED WHEN MR. PENNYPEPPER SAID RUFUS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE OFFICE?

R. "the entire class sucked in its breath, like one person"

Q. HOW DOES THE AUTHOR DESCRIBE RUFUS AS HE LEFT THE CLASSROOM?

R. "standing very straight Rufus went out of the room and down the hall to the little round office where Mr. Pennypepper did his work and interviewed the bad."

Q. HOW WAS THE OFFICE DESCRIBED?

R. 1) little round office

2) in the part of the building "built like a castle"

3) Rufus had been there once to take in his health certificate after he had scarlet fever

The Writing Experience

Q. HAS ANYTHING EVER HAPPENED TO YOU SIMILAR TO WHAT HAPPENED TO RUFUS? HAVE YOU EVER DONE SOMETHING THAT SEEMED QUITE HARMLESS THAT LED TO LOTS OF TROUBLE FOR YOU? SINCE I KNOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE DR. DOUGLAS, MR. JUDY AND MR. BARTH READ YOUR PAPERS, YOU MAY GO AHEAD NOW.

[NOTE: The children eagerly set to work and the visitors commented on how industrious the class was--not only during the writing, but earlier during the discussion period as well. They also noted that several children were concerned about the appearance of their papers and asked for spelling help, and Andrew McDaniel even recopied his paper. The compositions written during this time appear in the Appendix on pages 172-184.]

A Teacher's Experience with Composition

UNIT III

Playing with Words
(Poetry Unit)

Northwestern University
The Curriculum Center in English
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Contents: Unit III
(Poetry Unit)

Acknowledgments ii

Contents iii

Preface 1

Lesson 1 3
"My Brother" by Dorothy Aldis 4
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 51-52.]

Lesson 2 7
"Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes 7
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 53-55.]

Lesson 3 13
"My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson 14
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 56-60.]

Lesson 4 20
"The Little Whistler" by Frances M. Frost 21
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 61-66.]

Lesson 5 26
"Choosing Shoes" by Ffrida Wolfe 27
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 67-73.]

Lesson 6, Part 1 30
"Hiding" by Dorothy Aldis 31
"Drinking Fountain" by Marchette Chute 33
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 74-79.]

Lesson 6, Part 2 38
"Hide and Seek" by A. B. Shiffrin 38
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 80-88.]

Lesson 7 41
"If You Ask Me" by Dorothy Aldis 42
"There Was a Little Girl" (author unknown) 43
[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 89-95.]

Evaluation Session 48

APPENDIX (Children's Poems) 51

Preface: Unit III

During the year after the children had achieved some success in writing compositions, I was asked, "Why not introduce poetry to your children?" Yes, I thought, why not? Several children had shown some tendencies toward expressing their ideas in verse, and many children held an attitude toward poetry that it would be a challenge to attempt to change. When I mentioned to the class that we might read some poems before the end of the year, two reactions were obvious. Many commented, "Poetry is silly, baby-stuff, and who needs it anyway?" Several others went to the school library and found a few books containing poems. Sammy Wilson asked, "If I could find a poem or two that I like, could I read it to the class?" I told him he could. Sammy found several poems that he liked; however, he decided not to share them with the others in the class. He said, "Maybe they should look for their own poems. I like these, but maybe the others wouldn't." With these things in mind, I decided that if poetry was to have meaning for the children, the aims would have to be ones the children would understand.

My purposes for the poetry unit were several. I wanted the children to know that poetry can be enjoyable; that a poet may write for a specific limited audience as well as for a more general universal audience; that poetry is a means of communication similar to their earlier compositions; and that form and style in poetry may vary greatly depending on the intention of the poet.

As in the earlier lessons in composition, in which I tried to provide opportunities and encouragement for self-expression by introducing acceptable models from children's literature, I tried with each poem to stimulate the children's sensitivity to the poem and to the world around them. With each poem the pupils sought to find relationships between life as implied by the poet and the children's present or past experiences. The discussions allowed each child the privilege of choosing what experiences he wanted to share with others. As the early composition efforts were simple--the early poetic efforts were too. From the children's comments during the evaluative session I think it can be said that the children gained not only an awareness of a new form of expression but also an understanding of the difficulties involved in writing poetry.

Lesson 1

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "My Brother" by Dorothy Aldis for distribution to the class.

Introductory discussion: I began the lesson with a brief discussion about going to the store to encourage the children to recall their experiences.

Q. WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A GROCERY STORE AND A SUPERMARKET?

R. 1) A grocery store is smaller.
   2) A supermarket like the Blue Ribbon has more in it.
   3) They have more foods in it, more cans, more meats, more of everything.
   4) They have those check-out counters.
   5) They have baggers--because I bag for them.
   6) Those small stores don't have everything you want.
   7) The Blue Ribbon is so big they have pushcarts to put your groceries in.

Q. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE CARTS?

R. 1) Well, I put the things I'm going to buy in them.
   2) And they have special room to put kids in them.
   3) There is a little seat on the cart.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER GONE TO THE SUPERMARKET WITH YOUR MOTHER AND YOUR YOUNGER BROTHERS AND SISTERS?

R. Oh sure, lots of times.

Q. WELL, WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM ABOUT A FAMILY TRIP TO THE SUPERMARKET. PERHAPS YOU HAVE HAD A SIMILAR THING HAPPEN TO YOU.

"Today I went to market..." to "....Burst out laughing./I did too."

The complete model, the poem "My Brother," will be found on page 10 of Hello Day by Dorothy K. Aldis (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1959).

IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA IF WE TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO FIND THE MEANING FOR THE WORDS: POET, AND POEM.

[NOTE: I listed the words on the chalkboard and added the definitions the children found. The definitions the children found are given below.]

poem	a composition in verse; and verse means--lines of words that have repeated accents, beats and rhyme
poet	name given to the author, creator, writer of a poem

Discussion

After the model was distributed, I read the poem to the children. I wanted them to hear the rhythm of the phrasing and understand the ideas expressed.

Sammy: Say, I'd like to read it now.

Sandra Hall: Can I read it after Sammy? (After these children read, the entire class read the poem aloud. One pupil suggested that the boys read one line and the girls answer with another. After this was done, various children made comments about the poem.)

Linda Booker: This is pretty good for poetry. I really like this.

Sammy: I think I could do just as good if I wanted to.

Stanley: This poem was a little different than the ones I saw in our English book. This is real. I like it.

Ronald: That's right. Remember when that lady* was here, and she wanted to teach us about poems, and she read about dandelions being soldiers or standing guard or something like that? I never did know what that was supposed to be, but this is good. I can understand it.

Sammy: I've got a good one, but I don't want to write it--let's do it together. I think I've got the first couple lines. Write this down Mrs. Nesper. (I became the class secretary.)

I went to the shoe store with my mother.
She had to go back to get my brother.

[NOTE: At this time Sammy related exactly what happened to him at the shoe store. Darrell Phillips, Sandra Hall, Michael Covington, and Sarah Johnson tried to help Sammy finish his poem. This group work was similar to the work in the earliest lessons when the class wrote group compositions. Three poems were written during this period: Linda Booker's and Iris Ocasio's which were done independently; and Sammy's which became a cooperative effort. The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 51-52.]

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*The lady referred to is a language arts consultant who demonstrated a lesson in poetry, using my pupils for the demonstration, early in the school year.

"Well, son, I'll tell you:/Life..." to "....And life for me ain't been no crystal stair."

The complete model, the poem "Mother to Son," will found in The Dream Keeper by Langston Hughes (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1932).

Source for this use: The First Book of Poetry, ed. Isabel J. Peterson (Anthology) (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1954) page 70.

Lesson 2

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes for distribution to the class.

Introductory discussion: The discussion was very brief because I felt the children would gain more from discussion after the model had been read.

Q. TODAY WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM NAMED "MOTHER TO SON" BY LANGSTON HUGHES. WHAT DOES THIS TITLE TELL US?

R. A mother is going to talk to her son.

Q. YES. A MOTHER IS GOING TO TALK TO HER SON, AND THE THINGS SHE HAS TO SAY ARE VERY IMPORTANT.

Discussion

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO READ THE POEM TO YOU, AND THEN I'LL HEAR WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT. (I read the poem. The children's comments follow.)

R. 1) This is like the speech from Jody and Jody's father.

2) This is country talk.

3) This is the way Sammy's country cousin talks.

4) Well, I think that it's the way lots of people talk. It just means, probably, that his mother didn't go to school much.

5) Oh, okay, she may not have gone to school much, but she reminds me of my mother. My mother didn't talk too good either; so a couple years ago she started to read my books and now she does much better.

Sandra Hall: Can I read this poem again? (Sandra read the poem aloud, and the children asked if the poem could be read again. This time the entire class read the poem out loud.)

Q. PLEASE READ THE FIRST TWO LINES AND TELL ME WHAT THEY MEAN.

R. 1) She is telling her son about life.

2) She tells him what to expect when he grows up.

3) She says life hasn't been easy for her.

Q. SHE MENTIONS CRYSTAL STAIR, TACKS, SPLINTERS, BOARDS TORN UP-- (Here Stanley cut in.)

Stanley: Don't forget "no carpet on the floor--Bare."

Sandra Hall: Don't forget the darkness and no lights.

Sarah Johnson: And don't forget the landings and corners--that's when things were steady, maybe steady, and bad--but always up.

Q. FINE. BUT ALL OF THE THINGS MENTIONED HERE ARE ABOUT STAIRS. IS SHE TELLING HER SON THAT HE SHOULD WATCH OUT FOR STAIRWAYS?

R. No! She says her life is like climbing up stairs that look bare. She says life "ain't been no crystal stair."

Q. WHAT IS SHE TRYING TO SAY WHEN SHE SAID "CRYSTAL STAIR"?

R. 1) Well, crystal is clear and bright and sparkly.

2) And her life is not clear and bright and sparkly.

3) And life is like climbing upward, like steps.

Q. OH, YOU MEAN THAT TACKS AND CARPETS AND BOARDS AND BARE SPOTS ARE NOT REALLY TACKS, AND TORN UP BOARDS?

R. 1) No, that's the trouble she has had.

2) That sounds like money troubles, husband troubles, kid troubles, fights, and maybe even policeman troubles.

3) Don't forget gas and electric troubles. You know, the bills that come all the time.

Q. THEN MOTHER'S LIFE HAS BEEN HARD, BUT WHAT DOES SHE SAY TO HER SON?

R. 1) "So boy, don't you turn back"

2) "Don't you set down on the steps"

3) "'Cause you find it kinder hard."

4) "Don't you fall now--"

5) "For I'se still goin', honey,"

6) "I'se still climbin'"

7) "And life for me ain't been no crystal stair."

Q. TELL ME, WHAT GOOD IS THIS ADVICE TO YOU?

R. 1) Keep trying.

2) Try to pass.

3) If you fail, don't give up, keep trying.

4) If you want to get on patrol, keep trying and maybe your grades and everything will be okay and you can get on.

5) If things look pretty bad--trouble and everything--keep trying, and you'll be okay.

6) Don't sit down on the job; keep trying no matter what happens.

Q. WHAT COULD THIS POEM DO FOR ME?

R. 1) Tell you that you should never give up.

2) Maybe you should want to be better than just our teacher, say a principal or something. Well, if you do, you'll get it--if you keep climbing and never give up.

Sandra Hall: Mrs. Nesper, do you think you'll leave us?

Q. I WON'T LEAVE YOU SANDRA, DON'T WORRY. WHAT WOULD THIS POEM MEAN TO OUR PRINCIPAL?

R. Well, they have lots of trouble, and they should not give up. They should just sit and work it all out.

Q. DO YOU THINK YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER COULD GET SOMETHING OUT OF THIS POEM?

R. 1) Boy, they sure could. When my mother thinks there is no end to her troubles, she could see how some other mother did hers.

2) And my mother thinks she's got trouble in court! Well, she could read this and see that nobody is without trouble.

Stanley: This isn't the only trouble we read about. We found in those models other kids who got advice, too.

Ronald: Marly and Joe were told to keep out of their father's way because he was a prisoner in the war.

Sandra: Mafatu, too.

Gylda: Oh, no, his father was "grim and silent," remember?

Sammy: Seenie in Tree Wagon,--oh, no, she didn't take any advice. Her trouble was she wouldn't leave her cats behind.

Michael: Don't forget Meg in,-- (Cynthia interrupted.)

Cynthia: In A Wrinkle In Time. Her brothers told her not to fight and to behave herself.

Michael: She was also told to do better in school by her teachers.

Gylda: Dobry had to sit and listen to his mother's advice about growing into the peasant she thought he should be.

William: Esther in Plain Girl was told by her father not to make friends or look at the kids either.

Lona: Marya tried to tell her teacher about herself, but she didn't listen. But Marya's mother once told her about the old and new calendars.

Sammy: That's not advice. That's explaining something.

Q. ISN'T ADVICE, EXPLAINING SOMETHING, TOO?

Sammy: Yes, but they are different.

Darrell: Advice is something for you and your behavior, but just to explain something about calendars is information, like school work.

Sammy: Oh, Sarah Noble was told by her mother to "Keep up your courage," whenever she was afraid.

Andrew: Do we have to write poems about advice?

Q. NO, OF COURSE NOT.

Andrew: Well, I've got an idea. How about everybody doing a poem or verse or whatever you want to call it, right now. Can they be any length--you know--long or short?

Q. ANDREW'S IDEA IS A GOOD ONE. YOU MAY START NOW AND WRITE WHATEVER YOU WANT TO SAY. WHEN YOU DECIDE THAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN WHAT YOU REALLY WANTED TO SAY, THEN IT IS FINISHED. IF WHAT YOU WANTED TO SAY CAN BE SAID IN A FEW LINES OR MANY LINES, MAKES ABSOLUTELY NO DIFFERENCE. A THING IS DONE WHEN YOU, THE POET, DECIDE IT IS COMPLETE.

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 53-55.]

Lesson 3

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson for distribution to the class.

Vocabulary

Difficult Words	Children's Definitions
1. notion	idea
2. coward	someone who is afraid
3. nursie	nurse, full-time baby-sitter
4. buttercup	flower
5. arrant	thorough, complete, out-and-out

Introductory discussion: The brief discussion before the model was read reviewed the first two poems and introduced the poem in this lesson.

Q. WHAT WERE THE SUBJECTS OF OUR FIRST TWO POEMS?

R. One was about a mother giving advice to her son, and the other one was about what a baby brother did in a grocery cart at a supermarket.

Q. WHAT DO THESE TWO POEMS HAVE IN COMMON?

R. 1) Well, they really could happen.
2) They're realistic.

Q. TODAY'S POEM IS DIFFERENT. THE POET TREATS A VERY REAL THING IN A VERY INTERESTING WAY.

[NOTE: I walked over to the window and pointed to a shadow cast by one of the flower pots on the ledge.]

Q. WHAT IS THIS?

R. It is a shadow.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ONE?

R. 1) Yes, when the sun is out.

2) But you can have a shadow even if the sun isn't out. Remember the silhouettes Mrs. Hesper had when she used the lantern and traced our heads--that's our shadows.

3) Okay, so if there is some kind of light in a certain way, we have shadows.

Q. WHO OR WHAT CAN HAVE A SHADOW?

R. 1) Anything that is in the way of light.

2) Anything that blocks light.

Selection

My Shadow[*]

by Robert Louis Stevenson

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow--
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

---

[*] From A Child's Garden of Verses.

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

Discussion

Q. TODAY WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM ABOUT A SHADOW. LET US SEE HOW THE POET TALKS ABOUT A CHILD'S SHADOW. (I read the poem first; then the children read the poem aloud. The children's comments follow.)

Darrell: This is nonsense verse.

Stanley: No, it isn't, people have shadows. What it is, is that it's silly.

William: It is funny.

Sarah: It doesn't give advice like that last poem, "Mother to Son."

Vanessa: And it is different than "My Brother" because in "My Brother" it was real.

Sandra Keys: This is real, but the shadow is written like it was a real person. Like--"But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,/ Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed."

Sammy: Well, he didn't get up out of bed because the sun wasn't up to make him a shadow.

Sandra Hall: Mrs. Nesper, you read it with us this time. (We read the poem again.)

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE EVER HAD TO BABY-SIT?

R. (Many children raised their hands.)

Q. WHICH ONE OF THE POEMS THAT WE HAVE READ WOULD BE GOOD TO READ TO A CHILD YOU HAD TO BABY-SIT WITH?

R. This one would be good for a young kid.

Q. TO WHOM WOULD YOU READ "MY BROTHER"?

R. 1) To an older kid, especially if they have younger brothers or sisters.

2) Maybe even to my mother. She would like it too.

Q. TO WHOM WOULD YOU READ "MOTHER TO SON"?

R. To older children and to big people.

Q. HOW OLD IS THE "OLDER CHILD"?

R. Well, our age and older.

Q. HOW ABOUT THIRD GRADERS?

R. I don't think they would understand, except if they were very smart.

Q. WHAT HAS THE POET DONE IN THIS POEM, "MY SHADOW"?

R. Well, he took the boy's shadow and wrote a poem, a long one, too.

Q. YES, HE TOOK SOMETHING AS ORDINARY AS A SHADOW AND WROTE A POEM. WHY DID I SAY "AS ORDINARY AS A SHADOW"?

R. Because we see it all the time and never think too much about it.

Q. LET US THINK OF ALL THE VERY ORDINARY THINGS THAT HAPPEN EVERYDAY TO US AND SEE IF WE COULD NOT WRITE SOME INTERESTING THINGS ABOUT THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON WAS INTERESTED IN THE SHADOW THAT THE BODY MADE. PERHAPS YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN SOMETHING ELSE ABOUT THE HUMAN BODY THAT IS UNUSUAL OR FUNNY OR INTERESTING.

Iris: I could write about my feet.

Gylda: You mean I can write a poem about my doll or what ever I want?

Carol: And I can write about my hands getting into trouble.

Q. YES, THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT.

Sandra Hall: It is like writing a composition, but you don't write all the words.

Sammy: You write all the colorful and interesting parts of the story.

Ronald: But you don't write the things out like you would in a sentence for your composition. The lines are shorter.

Stanley: And they have a rhyming thing to it--a beat like a drum or something.

Q. YES, I BELIEVE YOU ALL HAVE A FINE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT GOES INTO WRITING A POEM. THIS WILL BE SIMILAR TO YOUR COMPOSITIONS. IN THE BEGINNING-- (Here Stanley interrupted.)

Stanley: Yes, in the beginning we did compositions together until we knew what we were supposed to be doing, and our first compositions weren't as good as the last ones and this is going to be about the same.

Q. RIGHT, THAT'S EXACTLY IT.

Sarah: I want to ask a question. Sammy said we are supposed to write all the beautiful words and colorful details and leave out all the words that you don't need to make someone understand what you are writing. And you said that was okay, but in the poem about the mother giving the boy advice--well, I think that's different. See, she tells the boy about life and how he's got to keep trying. But she doesn't really come out and describe the troubles she's had. She says it's like climbing a staircase, and her's hasn't been "no crystal stair."

Q. SARAH, YOU HAVE AN EXCELLENT POINT. THE POET COMPARES LIFE TO CLIMBING A STAIRCASE--THIS IS CALLED IMAGERY.

[NOTE: I wrote the word on the chalkboard and the children searched for a definition. They said, "Imagery is pictures in your head. Words you read that make pictures in your head."]

Q. THE POET DECIDED HE COULD MAKE HIS READERS UNDERSTAND THAT LIVING

AND WORKING FOR SOMETHING IN LIFE IS "LIKE" OR "SIMILAR" OR "COMPARABLE" TO CLIMBING STAIRS. WHENEVER THE PROBLEMS IN LIFE WERE VERY DIFFICULT AND THINGS LOOKED MIGHTLY GRIM, THE POET SAID ___?___ (The three words "like" "similar" and "comparable" were placed on the chalkboard to familiarize the students with them.)

R. 1) torn up carpets

2) tacks

3) no lights

4) broken boards

5) splinters

6) bare wood steps

7) darkness

Q. AND WHEN THE WOMAN'S PROBLEMS SEEMED NEITHER WORSE NOR BETTER, THE POET SAID ___?___

R. 1) corners

2) landings

Q. THE PICTURES OF THIS STAIRCASE THAT WE HAVE IN OUR MINDS ARE THERE BECAUSE THE DESCRIPTIONS WERE SO BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN. THIS THEN, IS IMAGERY--MENTAL PICTURES OR IF YOU LIKE, PICTURES IN YOUR HEAD. (I placed "mental" on the board, and the children looked for a definition. They decided "mental" was related to "the mind or our heads.")

THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME YOU HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED TO IMAGERY, BUT IT IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE GIVEN IT A NAME.

Sammy: It's just like the time we had feeling, touch and emotion. We had to figure out words that could separate the feelings inside our body and the things we feel with our hands or our skin.

Sandra Hall: So, all the descriptions we've talked about and the senses and the emotions--anything that can make a picture in my mind can be called imagery.

Ronald: Well then, all the descriptive passages could bring pictures to your mind, and poetry does the same only more of it, and it's all together.

Q. YES, AND I BELIEVE RONALD'S EXPLANATION IS A GOOD ONE. FOR THE PRESENT WE CAN USE HIS DEFINITION. "POETRY IS SIMILAR TO THE COMPOSITIONS THAT WE'VE WRITTEN. THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT THERE IS MORE IMAGERY IN POETRY, AND IT IS WRITTEN CLOSER TOGETHER."

Sammy: Well, let's try this poetry writing and see if it will make sense. Can we try it out on our friends?

Q. YES, YOU MAY TRY YOUR WORK OUT ON YOUR FRIENDS, BUT REMEMBER YOUR TALKING MAY DISTURB OTHERS. KEEP YOUR VOICES LOW, PLEASE.

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 56-60.]

Lesson 4

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "The Little Whistler" by Frances M. Frost for distribution to the class.

Introductory discussion: I led a brief discussion to help the children recall their experiences with whistling.

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW HOW TO WHISTLE?

R. I do. (A show of hands indicated that the majority of the children know how to whistle.)

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU FIRST TRIED TO WHISTLE?

R. I sure do.

Harriet: I'll never forget that whistling song I had to learn in kindergarten; boy was I mad.

Q. MAD ABOUT WHAT, HARRIET?

Harriet: Well, see we had to learn this song for an assembly show, and I just couldn't do it. I went home and tried and tried, but nothing came out but my spit in a shower all over everything.

Q. WHAT DID IT SOUND LIKE?

Harriet: In the beginning, mostly spit and a lot of blowing air. Then, finally, one sound came out, and I could make some more sounds come out. But in the beginning, I guess, all the sounds, sounded pretty much the same.

Q. CAN YOU WHISTLE A LINE OF SOME SONG? ANY SONG?

Harriet: Sure, want to see? (Harriet whistled a line of an assembly song the class had recently learned.)

Q. IT SEEMS SOME OF YOU HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE WHEN YOU TRIED TO WHISTLE

"My mother whistled softly,/My father..." to "....And I can whistle now!"

The complete model, the poem "The Little Whistler," will be found in The Little Whistler by Frances M. Frost (New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1949)

Source for this use: The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature (Chicago [now Glenview]: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1961).

FOR THE FIRST TIME. IS THAT RIGHT?

R. 1) Sure, and when I couldn't get it started right, my friends made fun of me.

2) My mother used to tell me to shut pp and be quiet.

Q. WHAT MADE YOU KEEP TRYING?

R. 1) Well, I don't know, maybe because other kids knew how and I wanted to do it like them.

2) Some of the kids laughed at me when I couldn't whistle; so I just kept trying, when they weren't around, until I got it.

3) Oh, I guess everybody knows how to whistle by now.

Q. WELL NOW, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. I'LL TELL YOU A SECRET; I CAN'T WHISTLE. I CAN MANAGE ONLY ONE NOTE, AND I'M NOT SURE OF THAT VERY OFTEN. (I demonstrated with my one and only note.)

R. Gee, teacher, you really can't whistle good.

Discussion

Q. TODAY WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM CALLED "THE LITTLE WHISTLER" BY FRANCES M. FROST. THE POET WRITES ABOUT A CHILD LEARNING HOW TO WHISTLE. (Sandra Hall read the poem aloud.)

Stanley: This poor kid could finally whistle after he tried so many times; he got courage from a bird.

Harriet: I can remember when I tried to whistle. Everyone made fun of me; so I know how that boy felt.

Q. DID THE POEM SAY "BOY"?

R. 1) No, it didn't.

2) It could be any kid learning how to whistle.

3) It doesn't make any difference who the person is; look at Mrs. Nesper's whistle.

Andrew: When a person tries to whistle, it all sounds the same in the beginning no matter if it's a girl or boy or teacher, right?

Stanley: I just can't get over the things poets write about--like this whistling thing.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN STANLEY?

Stanley: Well, I don't know, but to sit down and write about something like a person learning how to whistle--is that something important?

Q. YOUR COMMENT REMINDS ME OF THE MODELS WE HAD. IT SEEMS TO ME YOU AND SEVERAL OTHERS WERE TROUBLED BY THE SUBJECTS THOSE AUTHORS WROTE ABOUT. DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT WE FINALLY DECIDED?

Stanley: Oh, wait a minute. Yeah, I think I've got it now. We said that it was important.

Sammy: If other people, other people anywhere in this world had gone through the same things you had, well then, it was important to write it down so that others could share it.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT YOU ARE SAYING?

Stanley: Like Dobry. He had his own mind made up about his drawings, and his mother had her mind made up and there was this difference in ideas--a conflict, right? Well maybe this something goes on here or in another country and in another place. So long as other people feel the same things or have gone through the same things, it becomes important to write about it.

Sammy: Oh, he means universal. Being able to share feelings everybody can know and understand.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THIS POEM, "THE LITTLE WHISTLER"?

Sammy: When people learn to whistle, they feel the same as the kid in this poem.

Q. LET US READ THE POEM TOGETHER.

[NOTE: I wanted to refresh the children's memories not only about the thoughts expressed, but also the pattern of the poem.]

Q. DO YOU NOTICE ANYTHING ABOUT THIS POEM THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS WE HAVE READ?

R. 1) Yes, this poem has a break in it.

2) The break comes after the eighth line, and then there are eight more.

Q. **WHY DO YOU THINK THERE IS THIS BREAK BETWEEN THESE LINES?**

R. The only thing I can see is that the first eight lines are talking about the things that have already happened, and the last eight lines talk about what happened that day.

Q. **THE POET WROTE A POEM, SIXTEEN LINES LONG, AND HE HAD A BREAK BETWEEN THE EIGHTH AND NINTH. YOU AS A POET, MAY DECIDE WHERE YOU WANT TO HAVE A BREAK.**

R. 1) If I write a poem, and I think I want a break someplace, it's okay, right?

2) And if I want to skip a line I can?

Q. **YES, YOU MAKE ALL THOSE DECISIONS. DO YOU THINK IT SHOULD ONLY BE BETWEEN EVERY EIGHTH AND NINTH LINE?**

R. 1) No, that's left to us.

2) Say, yesterday's poem was different. (The children looked into their desks and took out their copies of "My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson.)

3) This poem about the shadow breaks after every fourth line.

Q. **AFTER LOOKING AT THESE TWO POEMS, WE CAN PROBABLY--** (Here Sammy interrupted.)

Sammy: We can have breaks where we want.

Stanley: But there seems to be a pattern too, either four lines or eight lines.

Sandra Keys: But I wrote one yesterday, and I had a break after every two lines.

Q. **CAN SANDRA DO THIS?**

R. 1) Yes, I guess so; she wrote it.

2) Yes, as long as she sticks to the pattern of every two lines.

3) Well, I think, if a person feels they want to break so that

the reader can understand the thing better, that's all that really counts.

4) So it's not really where you break, or how many times you do it. Did you say what you really meant to say? That's the only thing that matters.

Q. I THINK ALL OF THESE COMMENTS ARE VERY INTERESTING. YES, IT IS THE POET WHO MUST DECIDE WHERE THE BREAKS COME AND HOW OFTEN THEY ARE USED. BUT REMEMBER, HE MUST KEEP IN MIND HIS READER. HE WANTS TO SHARE THE EXPERIENCES HE IS WRITING ABOUT WITH HIS READERS, SO HE WILL WRITE IN SUCH A WAY THAT HIS IDEAS CAN BE UNDERSTOOD.

Iris: Do we have to write poems about whistling?

Q. NO, YOU CAN WRITE ABOUT WHATEVER YOU WISH.

Iris: I'd like to write about something that happened to me and my hair.

Q. IF YOU LIKE, YOU MAY TAKE AN EXPERIENCE, ANY EXPERIENCE THAT YOU LIKE, AND WRITE A POEM ABOUT IT.

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 61-66.]

Lesson 5

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "Choosing Shoes" by Ffrida Wolfe for distribution to the class.

Introductory discussion: Our opening discussion was about buying clothes.

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU PICK OUT YOUR OWN CLOTHES WHEN YOU GO SHOPPING?

R. 1) Sometimes.

2) Never.

3) Oh, they let you think you are, but when I choose a dress, she says, "That's too much money; it won't wash; I'm not buying anything that's going to the cleaners. Forget it."

4) Oh, once in a while I do.

5) It depends on whose paying for them--me or my mother or my father. ("Me" here means his allowance, errand savings, or gift monies.)

Q. HOW MANY OF YOU ARE ALLOWED TO BUY THE SHOES YOU WILL WEAR FOR SCHOOL OR PLAY OR SPECIAL OCCASIONS?

R. 1) Never!

2) My mother would kill me for sure.

3) I tried, but she said the ones I wanted wouldn't last. She said it would be like throwing money away.

"New shoes, new shoes,/Red and..." to "...mat shoes,/That's the sort they'll buy."

The complete model, the poem "Choosing Shoes," will be found in The Very Thing by Ffrida Wolfe (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1928).

Source for this use: The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature (Scott, Foresman and Co.)

Discussion

Q. WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM ABOUT A CHILD WHO SEEMS TO HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS YOU HAVE.

Sammy: I'd like to read this, teacher. (Sammy read the poem aloud and then Sandra Hall read the poem again.)

Another child: Let us all read this time, okay? (The entire class read the poem aloud.)

Q. WHO IS DOING THE TALKING IN THIS POEM?

R. A child is supposed to be talking to us.

Q. WHAT IS THE CHILD COMPLAINING ABOUT?

R. She is complaining about the shoes they buy for her.

Q. WHO ARE "THEY"?

R. Her mother or father.

Q. AND WHAT KIND OF SHOES DOES SHE WANT?

R. 1) "Red and pink and blue shoes"

2) "Buckle shoes, bow shoes,
    Pretty pointy-toe shoes,
Strappy, cappy low shoes;
    Let's have some to try."

3) "Bright shoes, white shoes,
    Dandy-dance-by-night shoes,
Perhaps-a-little-tight shoes,
    Like some? So would I."

Q. WHAT KIND DOES SHE GET?

R. "Flat shoes, fat shoes,
    Stump along-like-that shoes,
Wipe-them-on-the mat shoes,
    That's the sort they'll buy."

Q. AND WHAT KIND OF SHOES ARE THEY?

R. 1) everyday shoes

2) school shoes

3) ugly shoes

4) clumsy shoes

Q. YESTERDAY WE TALKED ABOUT BREAKS IN POEMS AND PATTERNS IN POEMS. WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THIS POEM?

R. 1) Well, this one has a break after every four lines.

2) And the poet has one line out and the next line in a little bit.

3) And she has "_But_" on a line all by itself.

Q. WHY DO YOU THINK "_BUT_" IS OUTSTANDING?

R. Well, because, "_But_" is what she got--those ugly flat and fat shoes.

Q. ARE THERE ANY OTHER REASONS?

1) She wanted us to see that the kid got only everyday shoes, not the ones she wanted.

2) It makes you look at it because it's different than one line in and one line out.

Q. SHE CALLS OUR ATTENTION TO THE LAST FOUR LINES BY PLACING "_BUT_" IN THE MIDDLE OF A NEW LINE. NO ONE COULD MISS THE INTERESTING END TO THAT POEM. YOUR EYES CATCH IT IMMEDIATELY, BECAUSE THE PATTERN HAS BEEN CHANGED.

Ronald: Could we write about anything we wanted to buy and our mothers didn't get it for us? It doesn't have to be about shoes, right?

Q. YOU MAY WRITE ABOUT ANYTHING YOU LIKE RONALD. IT CERTAINLY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ABOUT SHOES.

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 67-73.]

Lesson 6

Part 1

Preliminaries: I duplicated two poems "Hiding" by Dorothy Aldis and "Drinking Fountain" by Marchette Chute for distribution to the class.

Introductory discussion: I led a brief discussion to help the children recall their experiences.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER PLAYED A GAME CALLED "HIDE AND SEEK"?

R. 1) Oh, sure.

2) We have lots of games that have some kids hiding and one kid called "it." The guy who is it has to find you.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER HIDDEN IN SUCH A PLACE THAT THE PERSON WHO WAS CALLED "IT" WALKED RIGHT BY AND MISSED YOU?

R. Yes, I remember when I was hiding in a gangway, and it was dark and the guy who was "it" ran through the same gangway. He could have touched me, but it was so dark he missed me altogether and ran right through.

Q. HOW DID IT FEEL TO BE SO CLOSE TO BEING TAGGED THAT YOU COULD ALMOST FEEL THE BOY'S HAND ON YOUR BACK?

R. Well, I could hear my heart pounding when he was that close, but when he passed me by, wow! I was real happy. I had fooled him good but then, he isn't so smart, that's why he is always "it."

"I'm hiding, I'm hiding,..." to "...so surprised to find/

Out it was me!"

The complete model, the poem "Hiding," will be found in Everything and Anything by Dorothy Aldis (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1925).

Source for this use: Poems to Read to the Very Young, ed. Frank Josette (New York: Random House, 1961).

Discussion

Q. WE ARE GOING TO READ A POEM ABOUT A CHILD WHO LIKES TO PLAY HIDE AND SEEK GAMES WITH HIS PARENTS. (Gylda read the poem aloud to the class. Ronald wanted to read it again. After he had read, all the children read the poem in unison. The children's comments about the poem follow.)

R. 1) This "Hiding" poem is nonsense.

2) It reminds me of "My Shadow."

3) I think it's good for young kids.

4) There are breaks in the poem every four lines apart.

5) I think it's cute, for little kids.

Q. DO YOU LIKE THIS POEM?

R. 1) Yes, but I don't know if I really like it for me.

"When I climb up/To get a drink,..." to "...don't get any/

Drink at all."

The complete model, the poem "Drinking Fountain," will be found in Around and About by Marchette Chute (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1957).

Source for this use: Poems to Read to the Very Young, ed. Frank Josette (New York: Random House, 1961).

2) I think some of the other things we've read are nicer--at least for me.

3) I mean really teacher, why would his mother want to look under the carpet?

4) And why would his father look into the mirror?

5) This is kid's stuff.

Q. PERHAPS YOU'LL LIKE THIS SECOND POEM BETTER.

[NOTE: The second poem was chosen to enable the children to make comparisons between the two. At this point I distributed the poem "Drinking Fountain by Marchette Chute.]

Discussion

The poem was read aloud by individual pupils and then by the entire class. Various comments from the children follow.

R. 1) Now that's more like it.

2) This really happened.

3) This happens to lots of people.

4) It happens to me all the time.

Q. YOU SEEM TO LIKE THIS POEM BETTER.

R. Oh yes, I really like this one best.

Q. WHY DO YOU DISLIKE "HIDING"?

R. Oh, I don't know; it's baby stuff.

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE PURPOSE OF READING POETRY?

R. 1) Well, let's see; we started out with "My Brother."

2) Yes, and that was good because it's something we know about.

3) It's real--it's realistic.

Q. ALL RIGHT, WE WILL CALL "MY BROTHER" A REALISTIC POEM BECAUSE WE HAVE EXPERIENCED SIMILAR THINGS.

R. 1) And then we had "Mother to Son."

2) That was different because it was real. It really was real, but the poet compared the lady's life to climbing a stair case.

3) He used imagery.

4) And it was a serious poem, and it was something everybody could read, except maybe the little kids.

Q. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT THE NEXT POEM WE HAD?

R. 1) That was "My Shadow" and that was like this one--nonsense.

2) Well, if it's not like nonsense, it is good for little kids.

Q. WHY IS IT GOOD FOR LITTLE CHILDREN?

R. 1) It's funny.

2) Because it's pleasant.

3) I know, it's enjoyable.

4) And it's entertaining, not for everybody, but for the children.

Q. WHAT ABOUT "THE WHISTLER"?

R. 1) That was good.

2) It was like "My Brother."

3) It was realistic.

4) It was something we experienced, too.

Q. AND WHAT ABOUT "CHOOSING SHOES"?

R. 1) That was good.

2) It was entertaining, and it was realistic too.

Q. NOW YOU ARE SAYING SOMETHING ELSE. YOU SAID THE POEM WAS REALISIC AND ENTERTAINING. CAN A POEM BE REALISTIC AND ENTERTAINING, TOO?

R. 1) Oh yes, it can be real, and it can be good, too.

2) It can be very entertaining and still be real.

Q. YOUR COMMENTS ARE ALL VERY INTERESTING AND I THINK YOU CAN NOW ANSWER THIS QUESTION. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF POETRY?

R. 1) I think, it must be realistic.

2) No, not really, it must be enjoyable when you read it.

3) It must entertain you.

4) Well, if that's true, then the poems we called nonsense must be good.

Q. WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

R. 1) Well, because it would entertain the little children.

2) Sure, they would enjoy them, like the kids in the kindergarten.

Q. THE PURPOSE OF POETRY, FOR US AT LEAST, IS ENJOYMENT. NOW THEN, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT POETRY DOES?

R. Well, when we had compositions, I think we said it was so that we could tell other people about us and the things we did.

Sammy: Oh he means, we could communicate to others.

Q. WHO ARE THE "OTHERS"?

Sammy: Oh, anyone who reads our papers, like you and Northwestern.

Q. WHY DID WE WANT TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS?

Sammy: So that the readers of our papers could learn about us.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU READ SOMETHING SAMMY?

Sammy: Well, then I'm the reader, and I learn.

Stanley: I get it now. Poetry is like our compositions. It's another way to communicate with other people.

Ronald: So if we want to, we don't have to write nonsense stuff, we can still tell people about us in our poems.

Darrell: Yes, but if all you wanted to do was to make people laugh, you could communicate that through poetry, too.

Q. IT SEEMS THAT MANY OF YOU WOULD RATHER READ POEMS THAT SEEM REALISTIC TO YOU. I WONDER WHY? I ALSO WONDER IF THE ANSWER IS CONNECTED WITH THE MODELS WE HAD IN COMPOSITION.

Sammy: Well, Mrs. Nesper, these realistic poems remind me of the models about the children, because I know about them.

Stanley: Because we have experienced some of these things.

Q. WELL, IF YOU AND SAMMY HAVE EXPERIENCED THEM, AND AN AUTHOR OR POET HAS WRITTEN ABOUT THEM, THEN, THE WORD WE ARE LOOKING FOR IS ___?___

Darrell: Universal. That means then, that the poems we like have something for all of us.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE POEMS THAT YOU DIDN'T CARE FOR, BUT YOU THOUGHT A SPECIAL GROUP--"THE LITTLE CHIDLREN" WOULD ENJOY?

Darrell: They're universal too, except they would be enjoyed by certain kids--young kids.

Q. A SPECIAL AUDIENCE--THE YOUNG CHILDREN, YOUNGER THAN YOU ARE.

Ronald: Could we write poems about the things we want to write about?

Q. YES, OF COURSE YOU MAY.

Sammy: Sure, after all, we want to communicate what we want to say.

[NOTE: The poems written during this period appear in the Appendix on pages 74-79. At the end of the period many pupils asked, "Mrs. Nesper, may we work on our poems in school tomorrow? I just didn't have enough time to think about what I wanted to say." I assured the class that their plan was perfectly all right, and we would continue the following day.]

"When I am alone, and quite alone,..." to "...come near me/
I pull in my head!"

The complete model, the poem "Hide and Seek" by A. B. Shiffrin, will be found in Poems to Read to the Very Young, ed. Frank Josette (New York: Random House, 1961)/

Lesson 6

Part 2

Preliminaries: I duplicated the poem "Hide and Seek" by A. B. Shiffrin for distribution to the class.

Introduction: Rather than reread "Hiding" by Dorothy Aldis or "Drinking Fountain" by Marchette Chute, I decided to motivate the pupils with another poem. I hoped this poem would prove to be the extra stimulus some of the pupils seemed to need.]

Discussion

Q. I'D LIKE TO READ THIS POEM "HIDE AND SEEK." LISTEN AND SEE IF IT'S DIFFERENT FROM "HIDING." (The children's comments follow.)

R. 1) I think it's real all right, but it's a little bit silly, too.

2) When I'm alone, and no one's around, I do silly things too.

3) So this is realistic.

4) And it's entertaining.

5) But it's also nonsense, but I don't mean that's bad; it's kind of good.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ALONE?

R. Yes.

Q. WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU ARE ALONE?

R. 1) Well it all depends, but if you want, I can write a poem about being alone.

2) Me too.

3) Well, why don't we write now?

Stanley: You know, I couldn't write one yesterday, but I think I've got one now.

Ronald: Me too, Mrs. Nesper.

Andrew: Well, I tell you, I didn't know much about this, but I've got something I'd like to write about. You'll see when I'm finished that it may not be what people like to read, but it's me anyway. Okay?

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 80-88.]

Lesson 7

Preliminaries: I duplicated two poems "If You Ask Me" by Dorothy Aldis and "There Was a Little Girl" (author unknown) for distribution to the class. Two poems with similar subjects were chosen with the hope of motivating both boys and girls. The only vocabulary word discussed by the children was "emphatic" which they defined as meaning "without a doubt."

Introductory discussion: We had a brief discussion before the poems were read.

Q. HAVE ANY OF YOU CLIMBED UPON A BED AND JUMPED UP AND DOWN, TWISTED, FALLEN AND JUMPED UP AGAIN?

R. Yes, sure. But not when my mother is around. (A show of hands indicated that all the children had engaged in this activity.)

Q. WHY WOULDN'T YOU JUMP ON THE BED WHEN YOUR MOTHER IS AROUND?

R. 1) Well, what do you think? I don't want to get hollered at for messing up the bed.

2) Besides, beds weren't made for jumping; they're for sleeping.

3) And you can break the bed that way.

Q. YOU SEEM TO KNOW WHY YOU SHOULD NOT JUMP ON BEDS, BUT IT DOESN'T STOP YOU. WHY?

R. Because it's fun.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER GONE HOME, TOSSED YOUR HAT, COAT AND BOOKS ABOUT AND JUST AS YOU ARE ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT, YOU HEAR MOTHER SCOLDING YOU FOR NOT HAVING HUNG UP YOUR WRAPS?

R. Yes, all the time. She's always hollering about something I did.

"Bill, where does your coat belong?..." to "....Good all day long."

The complete model, the poem "If You Ask Me," will be found in Hello Day by Dorothy Aldis (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1959).

There Was a Little Girl

(author unknown)

There was a little girl, and she wore a little curl
Right down the middle of her forehead.
When she was good, she was very, very, good,
But when she was bad, she was horrid!

One day she went upstairs, while her parents, unawares,
In the kitchen were occupied with meals,
And she stood upon her head, on her little trundle bed,
And she then began hurraying with her heels.

Her mother heard the noise, and thought it was the boys
A-playing at a combat in the attic,
But when she climbed the stair and saw Jemina there,
She took and she did whip her most emphatic.

Discussion

Q. TODAY WE HAVE A SPECIAL TREAT. WE HAVE A POEM IN HONOR OF THE GIRLS AND ANOTHER IN HONOR OF THE BOYS. (Stanley read "If You Ask Me" and Carol read "There Was a Little Girl." The children's comments follow.)

R. 1) Say, the boys have a poem about a lazy boy, and the girls have one about a lazy girl.

2) She isn't lazy; she is a tomboy.

3) No, she is a trouble maker.

Q. HOW MANY PARTS ARE THERE IN "THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL"?

R. Three parts.

Q. LET US READ THIS POEM AGAIN AND SEE WHAT THESE THREE PARTS ARE TALKING ABOUT. (The poem was read by three pupils.) NOW THEN, WHAT DOES THE POET DO IN THE FIRST PART OF THE POEM?

R. 1) He talks about the girl.

2) He tells what she looks like and how she acted.

Q. WHAT DOES THE POET DISCUSS IN THE SECOND PART OF THE POEM?

R. 1) He tells what she did.

2) Mother was in the kitchen.

3) The house was on two floors.

Q. WHERE DOES HE SAY THE HOUSE HAD TWO FLOORS?

R. 1) Well, "One day she went upstairs, while her parents, unawares,"

2) If it isn't two floors high, it sure isn't a flat like mine.

3) Wait a minute teacher, in the third part they talk about "A-playing at combat in the attic,/ But when she climbed the stair and saw Jemina there,"

4) So there it is; it was a whole house they lived in.

Q. GOOD, YOU MADE AN OBSERVATIC[illegible] AND BACKED IT UP WITH FACTS. WHAT HAPPENS IN THE LAST PART OF THIS POEM?

R. 1) It tells how the girl got whipped most "emphatic."

2) It tells the end.

Q. PART ONE INTRODUCED THE GIRL, PART TWO TOLD WHAT THE GIRL DID, AND THE THIRD PART ___?___

Sammy: And the third part told us the end, how the girl got whipped.

Q. IS "IF YOU ASK ME" SIMILAR TO THIS POEM?

Ronald: Let me read the poem again. (Ronald read the poem, The children decided the poems were different.)

Sandra Hall: This poem has no beginning, middle and end. First his mother scolds him for not putting things away, and the next three parts show Bill making excuses for himself.

Stanley: The poem about the boy is written different from the one about the girl.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

R. Well look here. The one about Bill has five lines in the first part before the break, and the girl's has four lines and some stick out a little and some are in a little.

Q. HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE A PARAGRAPH?

R. Well, the first line is started in a little bit.

Q. WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT BESIDES "IN A LITTLE BIT"?

Sandra Hall: Indent.

Q. RIGHT. (I went to the board and said--) I'LL PLACE X MARKS ON THE BOARD TO SHOW WHERE EACH LINE BEGINS. WE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THE PATTENS STANLEY IS TALKING ABOUT. (The children read the lines of each poem, and the chalkboard looked similar to the following.)

```
     "If You Ask Me"                  "There Was a Little Girl"

  X                             X
  X                                  X
  X                             X
  X                                  X
  X
                                X
  X                                  X
  X                             X
  X                                  X
  X
                                X
  X                                  X
  X                             X
  X                                  X

  X
  X
  X
```

Ronald: Well, that's all right for a poet if he wants to make patterns, but I just write what I feel, and if I feel that people could understand me better if I skip a line here, then I'll do it.

Q. I LIKE YOUR EXPLANATION RONALD. I THINK SOME OF THE OTHER CHILDREN WILL FIND IT HELPFUL TOO. YOU WRITE WHAT YOU FEEL, AND YOU WRITE IT

IN SUCH A WAY THAT A READER CAN BEST UNDERSTAND YOU.

AFTER ALL, WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF POETRY?

R. 1) Well, poems should be enjoyed.

2) It should tell the truth.

3) Well, I don't know about telling the truth. If it entertains you, that is what is important.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

R. 1) Well, when I said truth I meant I don't like nonsense kinds of poems.

2) And that's what I was trying to say--that nonsense is all right if it entertains somebody.

3) Sure, as long as somebody, someplace, likes it, it is good. After all, you don't have to like everything that people write.

Q. YOU HAVE SAID, POETRY SHOULD ENTERTAIN, AND IT SHOULD BE ENJOYED, AND IT SHOULD BE TRUTHFUL.

Stanley: No, take the truthful part out; just leave entertain and enjoy.

Q. WHAT ELSE DOES POETRY DO?

R. Well the only thing left, I think, is to tell something.

Q. IS THERE ANOTHER WORD THAT SAYS THE SAME AS "TO TELL"?

Darrell: To communicate.

Q. GOOD. POETRY SHOULD ENTERTAIN, BE ENJOYED AND OF COURSE, IT IS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

WHAT DOES THE POEM ABOUT BILL TELL US?

R. 1) It tells us about a boy who doesn't pick up after himself.

2) Like me, that kid's like me.

3) Me too, teacher.

Q. WHAT ABOUT OUR GIRL WITH A CURL?

R. 1) She was "whipped most emphatic," and I guess that's like me, too.

2) You mean that's like all of us.

Q. IT SEEMS MANY OF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SITUATIONS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN OUR POEMS. PERHAPS YOU CAN WRITE A POEM ABOUT ONE OF THEM.

[NOTE: The children's poems appear in the Appendix on pages 89-95.]

Evaluation Session

During the final period of the unit "Learning to Play with Words" I led a brief discussion to learn how the children felt about the unit.

Q. WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THESE LESSONS IN POETRY?

R. 1) Poetry isn't bad, now.

2) Poetry isn't baby stuff and nursery rhymes.

3) It isn't easy to write; I'd much rather write compositions.

Q. WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

R. 1) Well, if I wrote a composition, I'd write it as if I were talking, but poetry is different. I have to think harder about what I really want to say. And one word has to do the job of many words.

Stanley: And one word can tell so much more in a poem, so you have to be careful so that the reader gets what you're saying.

3) When you're through, you have a few lines in poetry, but you have to think so long to write those few lines. In the same time I could have a long composition, and I mean long.

4) Do people know how long it takes to write a poem?

Q. IT SEEMS TO ME THESE COMMENTS ARE SIMILAR TO YOUR IDEAS ABOUT YOUR FIRST COMPOSITIONS.

Ronald: Mrs. Nesper, I'd take a twenty page model any day rather than work on one poem. Poems don't come so easy for me.

Q. YOU ALL SEEM TO AGREE THAT POEMS ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO WRITE, AND I MUST AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT THE TIME AND EFFORT ONE MUST PUT FORTH IN ALL WRITING--COMPOSITIONS OR POETRY. BUT TELL ME, WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE POEMS THAT WERE PRESENTED IN THE LESSONS?

R. 1) Well I'll tell you. I like them especially the ones that talked about real life things.

2) To me, I think, that only the things that were real for me and some other kid somewhere else was real good poetry.

3) Good writing on anything should come from life, right? Someone must have gone through it or seen it or felt it and then wrote it down. Now I'd read it, or somebody else would read it, and I'd know that others have gone through the same things. It would be just like the poem "Mother to Son."

4) Poems have more sense in them than I once thought. They're pretty good.

A Teacher's Experience with Composition

UNIT III

Playing with Words
(Poetry Unit)

APPENDIX

Children's Poems

Northwestern University
The Curriculum Center in English
1809 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60201
1966

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Children's Poems

Lesson 1*

I went to the shoe store with my mother,
She had to go back to get my brother.
The sales people greeted us with nicknames,
Melvin Monster for my brother
Herman Monster was the other.
These name were used until,
He tried on shoes, shoes, and shoes
"Which one do yo choose?"
Mother warned, "Don't wear those shoes out this store!"
But Herman Monster didn't listen,
And wore them out anyway.
It happen to be a rainy day,
And the new shoes were soon worn away.

--Samuel Wilson

One day when I came home from school feeling bad,
I went in the kitchen,
My Mother was mad.
I said "Mamma I don't feel so good."
She said, "What's the matter with you-you should?"
"What are you doing,
Playing a trick?
Tomorrow you're going to school,
SO DON'T PLAY SICK!"

--Linda Booker

One very hat and wet day,
I said to myself, "Iris you old hag,
You always have to go to school,"
I ate my breakfast.
I combed my hair, then I got my books.
All of a sudden, I looked at the clock.
It was time to go.
I wasn't ready yet!
I was in a big hurry.
I put on my sweater, and dashed out the door
When I got there, "Did I have time?"

---

*These poems were written on May 24, 1965.

But I ran up the stairs as fast as I could.
I got there on time, Good, Good, Good.
As I sat in my seat and put my books down,
The bell rang a long, loud alarm.

--Iris Ocasio

Children's Poems

Lesson 2[*]

i

My Brother

When my brother came home from work,
His wife was steaming mad.
And his little Junior was very sad
'Cause he had the blues,
He said, "I can't find me baseball shoes."
My brother hollered, "Stop this now.
I've got my own problems to settle."

ii

The Pot

One summer day when it was hot,
I went into the garden to get the flower pot,
And when I got there,
It was gone
From where it was always hung.

iii

The Mop

I went to to the store to get a pop
But when I came back,
I had to mop.
So I turned around and went back out the door.
When I got back,
My mother had gone and looked the door.

--Linda Booker

One day I went to the store with my mother.
She told me to get some Bread and butter
I went to the other side of the store,

---

[*] These poems were written on May 26, 1965.

I looked and looked and looked some more.
I saw a lady,
With some Bread and butter.
She left her push-cart in the middle of the floor.
I ran and got her bread and butter,
Ran to my mother;
Gave it to her.
"Why are you running?" mother asked.
"I took a lady's bread and butter."
"That's all right now,
I got some bread and butter."

--Sandra Hall

I was standing in my gang way
Not doing any harm
Then along came Michael and held me by the arm
I grabbed him by his waist.
And he fell against the wall.
He bounsed back on me
And we sank quickly to the ground
Something cracked against the sidewalk,
It was the crystal on my watch

My mother didn't scold
All she said was, "It was yours
To do with as you pleased,
Now its broken to bits, young man,
Do without it, or as yo please.

--Michael Holifield and
Stanley Brooks

Now I lay me down to sleep,
A bag of candy by my feet.
If I should die before I wake,
you"ll know I died of a stomach ache.

--Andrew McDaniel

One day in May,
The sky was blue,
The birds and bees sang and flew, but I was sad.
My Mother was mad.
The birds went away.
I was glad.
But my Mother still was mad,
So I tickled her
She started to smile,
Soon broke out in a laugh.

In a moment or two
The house was filled with laughter!
I hope you are too.

--Iris Ocasio

Children's Poems

Lesson 3[*]

One Saturday morning around 8 A.M
My mother's sixteen year old brother bought a bag of delicious yellow bananas.

And he said William get two,
Harriett,
Vivian,
Quin,
Just one.
"Can I have two, to?"
"Goodness No!
Those two are mine! he said.

--Harriett Collins

Grandmother bought me a Doll.
A special walking doll.
Her eyes were dark brown.
Legs were light brown.
Hair dark, dark black.
A beautiful doll.
Two weeks later there was no beautiful doll.
Sister Debra tried to walk the doll.
Tried to make the doll sit down,
"The Springs Are Broke."
Thats what Daddy said.
And I asked,
"Why did she do it?"
I just wanted to know.

--Vanessa Gamble

My Doll

One cold Christmas morning,
Before it was light.
I jumped out of bed,
And fell, OH, OH, oh! my -----!
I ran into the livingroom,
My brothers and sisters were there.

---

[*] These poems were written on June 1, 1965.

I ran and got my gift, a lovely walking doll.
She had on a dress,
With pink flowers on it,
And little white shoes and socks.
And then I tried to make her stand up,
But she only fell backwards,
"You naughty doll! Why don't you stand up, or walk?"
Then my sister came into the livingroom and said,
"Pick up your doll."
I told her I didn't know how to make her go right.
"Read the tag that hangs on the side."
"HOLD MY LEFT HAND UP AND I WILL WALK WITH YOU.
I raised her left hand,
SHE STARTED TO WALK!
Josh, tho bump on my -----.
Must have caused me some pain
'Cause I should have known
To Read the sign
Before raising my DOME.

--Sandra Hall

I have two little hand that go around with me,
A part of me you see.
But what's the use they don't really follow me.
When I play ball, I jump up and then
oops!
"It slipped through my hands."
When I'm deep in dishes and reach for a glass,
oops!
"It slipped through my hands"
When I reached for an egg to fix sister some food,
Oops!
"It slipped through my hands!"
Seems nothing I do is right.
Clumsy and careless is my middle name,
But it's not me, you must see,
Its my hands.
Crash! Bang!
Oops!
"It slipped though my hands."

--Carol Harris

One hot day, I wanted to go out
I wanted to play with My doll.
Mother said
"you cannot."
So I stayed put in the house:

Then I had an idea
Doll's hair would not comb

The steam comb would help.
Golly, what a mess!

Little sister saw what happened,
"Look at that silly doll."
So I said to her:
"Look at that silly doll of yours,
Her face is black
Black as tar,
Her dress and ribbon are black, too."
She began to cry.

Mother said,
"what is She crying far?"
"I called her doll black." so there.

--Mabel Harris

On my job
I count the milk.
On my job
I pass out the milk.
And I often tell my milk boy friends,
"I hope we have extra milk."
Then I say,
"Milk boy, Milk boy
I rink your milk down,
And let's get on and pass the milk on."

--Earnest Hayes

My Dog Blackie

He barks at night,
Gives everyone a fright.

Runs and jumps
when the suns up each day.

I love him so much
He can come and sleep on my bed.

This makes mother MAD
And then he pretends to be SAD.

--Sandra Keys

One freezing Friday night,
When I went to bed,
What did I see,
But two little blue eyes staring at me.

It was my doll,
She looked very tall,
By the big wall.
Her dress was yellow,
It made her look like cinderalla.
Her hair was all stylish,
Like a young lady's should.
And she stood in the corner,
Looking at me all night,
With her pretty blue eyes sparkeling bright.

--Gylda Moore

My tiny feet

I have two tiny feet.
They walk across the street.
And sometimes they itch.
When I put sock on,
Or when I take them off.
Wow! They stink.
And then they turn pink.
But I can't complain.
They still take me around.

--Iris Ocasio

My Dog Spottie

One evening, very early before the sun set down,
My little dog Spottie
Jumped up
Around and Around and down.
I went in the front
Mother had to see this
But by the time she came
Spottie was not there.

--Latricia Patrick

Patral Boy,
Patral Boy!
Do your duty!
Here comes the captain with the Superintendent.
Superintedent gonna tell the Gym Teacher,
Gym Teacher gonna tell the Principal
Principal gonna tell the Motorclub,
Motorclub gonna tell the teacher at School.
And they are gonna tell us,
And we are gonna to do a Better Job.

--Ronald Saulter

One day in the morning
When I had awaken,
Then I looked before me,
My blanket had been taken!
I looked upon the wall
And saw an enormous jacket.
Then I knew who was behind it all.
Now, I'd find my very little blanket.

--Larry Travis

i

My Doll

My doll a pretty little thing,
Her eyes as bright as gold,
Her legs as dark as coal,
And even though she's a bad little doll,
"Cause she's a walking doll and knocks little things down all around,
"She still MY little doll.

ii

My Frog

I had a frog one day,
And my mother would always say,
"It will go away some day."
And one morning early, it hopped away.
And I could not find it any way,
Nor any day.

--Lona Wilson

Children's Poems

Lesson 4*

Scare!
Yes siree!
I couldn't ride a two wheeler.
Father said, "If you don't know how to ride that bike, a beating you
will get on Saturday evening."
Two weeks had gone by, but by the third I could ride my bike.
Father said, "I was just teassing you, boy!"
Scare!
No siree!

--William Atkinson

One day my girl friend fixed her bike her name was Beverly,
But when I called her name out loud she said,
"Linda go climb a tree."
The next day I was on a hike,
And She was on that bike,
She said, "Linda do you want a ride?"
I said, "I can't ride a bike."
So I tried and I crash up against a pole,
But when I got off the ground,
I felt as if I had been in a hold.

Oops!

That All.

--Linda Booker

Once I had a two wheel bike
That I couldn't ride at all,
And when I tried to ride it,
I fell with a great big fall.
But once I tried to ride it
I didn't fall at all
I said "Brenda!" with a very loud call,
"I can ride my bike
And balance myself like a ball."

--Stanley Brooks

---

*These poems were written on June 2, 1965.

When I was in kindergarten,
We would sing a whistling song.
But one day when everybody was singing,
I was thinking,

I want to learn to whistle,
I always wanted to,
I'd fix my mouth to do it,
But the whistle woudn't come though.
I am giong to try it once again,
And ask my mother how I sound.
And when I do, she'll say,
"What a crazy Sound."

--Harriett Collins

One lovely day into the kitchen I went,
Asked my mother, "Could I iron some clothes today?"
"You don't know how." She said.
"But--come over here,
I will teach you how."
After a while, I started to iron!
Ouch!"
My poor fingers,
The iron slipped off of the board and -----
"Boom! Crash! Bang!"
"What happened in here?"
"Look at my floor!"
"You've ruined my carpet!"
"Oh dear. Oh my poor, poor floor!"

--Sandra Hall

My Shoe Strings

My Mother ties shoes neatly,
My father ties shoes quickly,
And I,
I tried to tie a shoe all day long.
Everytime I tried,
It ended up in knots.
Knots that were tied neatly,
And knots that were tied quickly,
But tell me,
What good are knots?

--Carol Harris

How I Learned to Wash the Dishes

When I was first told to wash dishes, I made a thousand wishes
'Cause my mother would whip me

If I broke any of those lovely dishes.

Then I was told
"Wash those dishes!"
"Wash those dishes!"
Wash those dishes!"
I washed dishes so many times
I began to think it was a crime.
Mother said,

"Don't be so slow,
We haven't any time, YOU KNOW!"
And then I learned
It was no use, I'd always hear,

"Wash those dishes!"
"Wash those dishes!"
"Wash those dishes, you Slow Poke!"

--Earnest Hayes

My Gym Shoes

I have some gym shoes, and everytime I look around and down,
"My shoe strings are not tied."
I tie them up,
And then go run and jump.
And usually fall down.
"My shoe strings are not tied."
I tie them up again.
Today I went out and ran and jumped.
Hey, Hey!
"My shoe strings were tied tight today,
All day."

--Sandra Keys

The first time I had to. change my little sisters deaper,
I was scured I was
Gonna druys the tiny little boby.
my mother wasnt there,
So I put the boby on the bed
And left to get some powder.
She fell down hard so hard you could hear her scream
Oh so very loud.
When big sister come home she said
"I'm gomna tell, youlet the boby fell down."
she could have been dead."

--Velma Madison

August 17 when I woke up,
I was five years old,
My sister had told,
To beat me five times until I turned cold.

And then along came September,
I would go to school.
Mother said to me,
"Don't be very Scared,
Because if you're very good,
You won't have to worry,
If you're bed, I'll feel very sad."

I cried one day,
I cried another,
But said my brother,
"Don't cry today,
Don't cry tomorrow,
Just sit down quietly,
And don't do a thing bad."

--Gylda Moore

My Hair

My hair is long and black and thick
It feels like a brick,
I started to comb it,
What a lovely mane.
It was full of tangals,
Oh! My miserable tangals
My miserable long and black and thick hair.
Even tho it would kill me, I'd brush and comb that hair.

Today I brushed and combed my hair,
There were no tangals there.
No! Not a one.
I called, "Mother, look no more tangals in my long and black and
thick hair.
Mother said "Yes honey, no tangals will you have if you care for
your lovely hair.

--Iris Ocasio

My mother can whistle
My father can whistle
My sister can whistle
And my brothers can whistle too
But I,
I can't whistle, no matter how I try.

But then you see
This is really me

They can do many things much better than I

No matter how I try,
They can do many thing much better than I

--Latricia Patrick

One day I started to whistle,
I had to wet my lips.
It seemed as though my mother fussed at me
Before the sounds left my lips.
I went downstairs,
Right on our porch, to proctice my new sounds.
When all at once, she hollered out,
"Linda Stop those Ugly Sounds!"

--Linda Pickett

One day I saw a book.
That almost shook!
The book was about the DeaD
Then I jumped into bed
I started to read it.
Then I started to beat it.
Then I wondered why?
Because the book was about
HOW TO MURDER YOUR WIFE IN BED.

--Larry Travis

i

Me: "Mother! Mother! How do you feel?"
Mother: "Pretty awful, and pretty awful."
Me: "When you say that you make me feel sad."
Mother: I know darling, just don't be sad.
"Cause I'll be all right."

ii

One little day I was bad,
And my mother, said,"
If you'll be bad, then I'll be sad."
So she made me wash dishes,
Then I made some wishes."
But they did no go.
She made me do everything
And included the washing of DOG!
But I said, If you make me,
I'll be ever so much worse.
She still made me,
Wash that filthy dog.

iii

The day before Christmas
I told my father to buy me a bike.
He asked me did I know how to ride.
"Yes of course" I replied.
My father said
"Find I will buy you a bike."
When I got it, he said,
"Now let's see you ride."
But when I got on, WOW!
BOOM! CRASH! SLAM!
I feel down
"You don't know how to ride.
If you have to ride on your teeth,
You will learn to ride that bike before you go up to eat."
And I did learn how to ride that bike with a WOW!
BOOM! CRASH! SLAM!

--Lona Wilson

Children's Poems

Lesson 5*

When I was getting my Easter suit,
I told my mother I wanted blue,
"That costs $22.65 you must be crazy for that price."
"The black one costs $12.95,
And thats thats the one you'll have to buy--OR ELSE!"

--William Atkinson

I went to the store to buy some shoes
Not old, not worn,
But brand-new shoes
And when I got my brand-new shoes
My mother said "There very good shoes
But much to hard and heavy shoes
And I'll be glad when the taps wear off those heavy, hard new shoes."

--Stanley Brooks

Wigs

Black wigs, Brown wigs
Old and new
I passed by a hat shop window
And I saw, a couple new wigs,
And a couple old ones too.
But what was so surpising was A
Green wig and a Blue wig!
    Blue wig green wig,
    "Who would wear you?"

--Harriett Collins

i

A Boy Named Roy

I know a boy whose name is Roy,
Who always jumps for joy when he gets something new.

---

*These poems were written on June 3, 1965.

His favorite of course
Is something blue
'Cause it can be chewed
At least, that's what HE said.

ii

Everywhere I go I think about Dr. No
Because I saw it at the show
When He got in trouble everyone said go, go. Dr. No.

--Michael Covington

I went to make my bed
Before I got through
My mother screamed,
"Why! Didn't you make it up
When you got up?"
"I don't know".
"How Come you Don't Know?
You use that word to often."

I went out that day and played till nine o'clock.
I washed and ate little that day
And went right to my bed.

I got up early, the next morning
And fixed my bed,
No better
No worse
I just made it up.
When she came in to see what was what,
She said. "Now that's more like it."
No better
No worse
Thats what I said
But she doesn't holler at me no more
And thats better than worse.

--Vanessa Gamble

One day My Sister took Me to the Store
"I'll have Some New Shoes For This boy."
"What color do you want?" Said The Man.
"We'll have Some brown Shoes now -----"
"But I don,t want Those brown Shoes
no Ma'm. I want black boots, black boots
Beatle boots That's all I'll Wear."

--Kenzy Gary

My Easter Dress

Pink dresses, white dresses,
Even every day dresses.
"Which one do you want?" asked mother.
"That pretty orange and white dress."
"You can't have that one,
We will have to take this one."

She got a blue and white dress,
It looked like an every day dress.
"That looks like an every day dress!"
"You better want this dress, if you don't want a whipping."

I looked at the pretty dresses,
Red dresses, white dresses,
Blue dresses, Orange dresses.
Even everyday dresses.
Which one would you choose,
Blue, pink, yellow or white?
But you and I know it will not be yours or mine.
It will be the one SHE chooses.
Not Yours,
Not Mine.

--Sandra Hall

My Easter Purse

A New Easter Purse,
Blue and red and yellow
Snaps, zips, clips
Thats what they do.
Pretty purses
Alligator purses
High priced purses
Just plain cheap purses
Which one will do?
Of course the plain old black is just the one for you.

--Carol Harris

We went to the shoe stare
My mother and I
The Man said,
"what kind do you want?"
I said "I ill have the pointed blue shoes in the window, Thankyou."
"what?" my Mother said.
"We'll take the same kind of shoes she has on--but in black."
"I won't wear those shoes, Just see if I Care."
Mother said "you will wear those shoes." and I do, so there.

--Mabel Harris

Last Friday, Mother said
"Let's get some shoes for you.
Pick out your own
you must learn to buy your own."
"I'll take these."
"White Shoes? I should say not!
In a few weeks time they ll be dirty,
Hardly fit to be worn.
No, we'll have to take those shoes there." "Black ones again," I
said in alarm.
"Is that what I'm to choose?"

--Earnest Hayes

New shoes, new shoes
All around the town,
Everyone buying new shoes
In this small town.
New shoes New shoes
Thats the one he chose
Black and white gym shoes is what he chose

--Michael Holifield

Funny shoes, Funny shoes,
Black and white shoes
Why they look like bunny shoes
And they have a strange old name--
SADDLE shoes, thats what they are named.

And everytime I go somewhere
They make me feel ashamed.
I usually hold my head down,
So that only I can see their clumsy faces.
But, I found my friends, would say,
Why do you wear that ugly frown?
What could I say?
One day a child said to me,
Ha ha, "You crazy duck,
What kind of shoes are those?"
I looked down and saw a wonderful thing,
And I SAID,
"SAY KID, LOOK DOWN AT YOUR FEET
YOUR MOTHER CHOSE MY STYLE SHOES,
SO NOW Who is the crazy duck?"

--Sandra Keys

one day I was going to the

store for a particular pair of

shoes "I want those shoes there."

my mother told me "I won't pay

ten dollars for a pair of shoes.

all I will pay is 5 dallors

and 98 cents a pair."

--Milton McCarter

I want some suede shoes
Bright new and graye shoes
"Oh, you can have some,
but not graye, dear boy,
you're much to dirty for that."
A pair of black shoes,
New suede black shoes
Is what I got that day.

--Larry McDaniel

One time I had to get me some new shoes
And I said I want them black. And she said you are going to get them white.

I got mad and did cry.
She said you better come back

and try them on and I went back and got them on

Home we went and I did cry.

They were too big,

she said

"I ain't takeng them back"

--Velma Madison

Did Ask What I Wanted

"Did'nt ask what I wanted,"
Solded purses, dresses, shoes, and socks,
And little children's playing blocks.
Mother took me to the dress dept.,
She got a pretty green and white dress,
Then she said, "I won't by any shoes today."
When we got home I found out why,

I almost began to cry.
My niece had shoes that were almost new,
But were to tight for her,
"You'll wear those shoes."
Oh dear, "Could I go outside?"
"But wear those shoes outside."
To myself I said,
"I don't like those shoes.
I don't like those shoes
DON'T LIKE THOSE SHOES
I"LL STAY INSIDE!

--Gylda Moore

Shoes, shiny clean and bright shoes
How I hate to buy,
I always get those same shoes,
Black ones with ties.

Pretty yellow and Green shoes
Clean and shiny bright.
Look as nice as dandelions in Dauglas park.

Gym shoes, tennis shoes
Pretty open-toed shoes,
Nappy, snappy low shoes
With taps
Thats what I'd like to try.

--Patricia Patrick

New shoes, New shoes,
I can buy my own shoes.
I walked down the street
And looked into the store window, I saw--
Black shoes and brown shoes.
I went into the store.
I picked my own shoes.
I paid the man for my shoes
And left the store.

--Linda Pickett

1

Could I have a bike?"
"Of course you can if a dollar will buy it for you."

"A dollar" I said.
"What will that buy?"
Mother said in a smile,
"One dollar less than $89.95."

ii

When I buy myself new shoes,
They always seem to tight or lose,
Mother always seems to say.

"Shoes too big
Shoes too small,
You don't know how to buy at all!"
Back to the store I troded along. "Remember dear, You're a size 4,
Please don't come home with three or five or seven."

--Ronald Saulter

I know a boy name Peter Gun, And his brother name
Clide Gun, And when I ran out side, I called, "Hey, Peter
Gun, where is The other Gun?" And he said, "Be quiet,
Hobo Joe, I've no Time now, I've got to go.

--Hosea Sims

One day I saw a movie
About Regis Toomey
I didn't know I was going to get scared
And I never went back to another movie

--Larry Travis

I know a boy who can't say whistle,
And his sister cant say thistle.
The boy tried to say whistle
And the girl tried to say thistle
I asked for their names,
They replied,
"Calamity and Jessie James."

--Samuel Wilson

Children's Poems

Lesson 6: Part 1*

Last Saturday afternoon,
When my cousin Mary had a party,
We ate
Ice cream,
Cake,
Cookies,
Peanuts,
Pops,
Popcron
Potatoe Chips,
Everything good for a stomach ache.
Everyone danced and ate and had lots of Fun.
We played pin the tail on the donkey
And told funny jokes,
And everyone danced and Ate and had lots of fun.

--William Atkinson

Every morning,
Ten O'clock Sharp
We leave for the water fountain
When it's my turn
I know what'll happen
I'll get splashed all over
Then I think it'll be just right
Won! no water now!
So I'll turn it up
You know what'll happen,
POW! RIGHT IN THE KISSER.

--Vanessa Gamble

The Water Fountain

To the fountain I went
For a drink of water.
I pushed a handle,
And water splased all over my face.
Some splashed upon my nose,
My mouth, and forehead,

---

*The poems in this group were written on June 4, 1965.

And even in my hair.
I tried to make it small,
But,
No matter how hard I tried,
It squirted up,
Into my eye.
And didn't drink water
    At All!

--Sandra Hall

Drinking Fountain

When I am very tired,
After climbing the stairs,
I go to the fountain
To get a drink,
But the water hits me right upon my eye.
When I try to make it small,
I only get popped right in the eye.
And I didn't get
A Drink at all.

--Carol Harris

One day when I went to the park,
I got me a drink of water,
But when I got there a crow was there
So I had to wait.
I waited and waited
finally he left
and I turned on the water--
POP, SPLASH, it was all over my face
and I said out loud,
"I kill you water. I really will,
May a big fire burn you up and
not a drop of water be left."

--Mabel Harris

I heard a noise like a rat-tat-tat-I followed the noise it was coming
    frome, behind the fince. I had found a little greenman siting
    on log, saying "rat-tat-tat. I found a hat,
Rat-tat-tat, I found a hat."
And then he flew away
With a rat-tat-tat.

--Rickey Harris

Went to the washroom,
One lovely sunny day,

When I came out,
I ran to the water fountain very gay.
I went to the left side,
Because the right one was being used,
So I counted to four,
So the water would'nt splash,
But when I put my mouth close to the water,
Splash!
Splash!
The water splashed right in my face.
Then the person who was at the right water fountain left.
But I got my face splashed all ready,
So I drank from the left side,
Then someone else came and drank from the right, Someone who I knew,
I stopped the water,
And said, "Hi".
Turned back on the water.
Splash!
Splash!
The water went again.

WHY DID'NT I WAIT!"
IT HAPPENED AGAIN.

--Gylda Moore

"Hello!"

My mother somtimes comes home very early, and knocks upon the door
My dog Blackie
Always jumps up and down upon her
Just to say "Hello.

One day she came home early
Blackie was asleep
She tip-toed in
not to wake him
But some how he heard
And woke up with a start.

He looked here and there
He looked everywhere.
Mother made a sound
He Heard It.

He ran to find her, hiding behind the door
Oh! How happy he was to find her
He jumped up and down and licked her hand,
He was so happy to find her.

--Iris Ocasio

The grass is turning green
Summer is almost here
School is almost over
Vacation time is near.

--Latricia Patrick

When I reach the third floor,
I usually sneak to get me some water.
I turn it up, to get some water,
And it slpashed, right in my face,
I turned it down,
And I didn't get very much water.

--Linda Pickett

One day I worked hard in the yard.
When I finished, it looks like a junk yard.

I wundered, Why?

Then I sighed. I worked so very hard in the yard and it looked like a junk yard.

--Larry Travis

On my way to Sears

On my way to Sears,
Looking and peering,
Asking mother questions:
"Where are we going?"
"To Sears."
"But we are going the wrong way."
"No dear, Its stright down from our house."
"What will we buy?"
"Gym shoes dear."
"Goody, Goody, a white pair for me
"You"ll be getting black,
Thats the kind I like!"

--Lona Wilson

1

I Like to hide

I like to hide
by your side.
When you must go

I feel so very low
I'm filled with sorrow.

I love you
You can love me
See, I can count--"One, Two, Three--
When you leave in the evening
I cant seem to find the light,
"Look up, See the dove
That means love."

ii

You go your own way

You go that way
I know my way
I must go this way.
Each day
I know I make you happy,
But I can see you dont really love me,
And that is fine.
We can be together In the day,
And I know I make you happy.

iii

Life

You ill
You kill
You'll end up on a hill

You eat
You sleep
You keep the Lords Day.

You live
You die
And sometimes, you'll cry

iv

ME

One day I called "Mother come here."
She said, "What for dear?"
"Come on quick"
O.K. dear"
When she got there
The pantry was bare

And food we had to buy.
I was glad, glad, glad
I felt like some king
With all those nice things piled so high on the shelves.
There was soda pop to drink
Cookies and Cakes
Corn, Bread and Beans
And tasty meats to roll up in the Bread.

--Samuel Wilson

Children's Poems

Lesson 6: Part 2*

Mother went to get me some Gym shoes,
I had to stay home
And watch
My sleeping Baby Brother.
I had to stay in the house,
Until he woke up,
Then I could go out.
But he still was asleep
He slept for a long time,
I was lonely
I wondered--I got scare
What if something should heppen,
A fire!
He's still asleep,
What could I do,
    Except
Holler out loud.

--William Atkinson

When I was a little boy
And I was very much alone.
My mother called me
And said to me
"Is there anything wrong?"
I said to mother
    "yes"
And I don't know how to say it,
I don't have anyone to play with.

--Stanley Brooks

i

I have never been left a lone
Because every where I went,
Mother left me with a friend,
An only child's friend--a dog.
He was trained.

---

*These poems were written on June 4th and 7th, 1965.

So whenever she went somewhere,
She left the two of us together.

And sometimes when she was away,
I'd go to the cookie jar,
I'd give the dog a cookie,
And take one for myself,
And after we had sollowed,
I'd play a game with him.
And when my mother got back,
She would say, "Let me see how you all look, My thats the way you
should always look."

ii

Thursday afternoon,
Almost everybody was talking.
A boy said,
"You act like you have no sense."
"You don't I said.
Then he said
"For your informotion, I'm busy."
"I don't give My information to anyone, I give it to the operator."
"You better run outside."
Then Sarah said,
"You goin' to beat that girl for nothin'"
"You aren't goin' to do nothin' no how."
But I knew all, along.
The whole thing was for nothin'.

--Harriett Collins

Look it Ron he's acting like James White.
Look out for him, he's acting like he's riding a bike.
BUT! he can't turn right.
Now he's fighting with me,
Can it be?

ii

When I am alone at home
I play a tone on my xylophone
It goes like this, ting-dong--
I do that went I'm alone.

--Michael Covington

Tuesday night
Mother went to the hospital
"You'll stay by yourself."
At eight O'clock my brother came in.

"Where's Moma?"
"Gone to the Hospital."
"Oh Dear!"
At Twelve O'clock my other brother came in,
"Where's Moma?"
"Gone to the Hospital."
"Oh Dear!"
That Saturday
She came Home
"Oh Glad, my dears!"

--Vanessa Gamble

My mother told me, "Open the door for the big ball-headed him." I opened the door, he fell on on the floor, the big ball-headed him.
My mother told to "Give him a drink, boy"
I gave him a drink, "My he does stink this ball headed him."
My mother told me tell him a story. I told him a story--
He fell on the floor--
The big ball-headed him.
My mother told me to bury him sweetly, the big ball-headed him. I was to bury him sweetly,
But he stood up on His feet, The big ball headed him

--Kenzy Gary

Being Alone

When I am by myself,
I start to play by myself.
I go to a mirror,
And start talking to myself.
I hit myself on the head,
While I looked into the mirror,
"Don't hit me again." I said.
Then I looked in the mirror,
I saw someone with a blue dress with white buttons on it.
"Who are you?" I asked.
I pretened that I didn't know,
That it was me.
"I know who you are.
You are me."
I put my hands over my eyes,
Then took them down,
And shouted,
"Boo!"

--Sandra Hall

When I am alone,
And have no one to play with.
I say to myself,
"The song says"
"When you are alone, the Lord is with you."
But I said to myself,
I do not see the Lord."
When my mother came home she said,
"Were you alone?"
"No!
The song says,
"When you are alone, the Lord is with you.
But I said to myself.
"I do not see the Lord."

--Carol Harris

One day when I was walking alone,
I sow a little light
It was dark
And I was walking hane, through the pork.
I was Scared
So Scared that I said to Myself
"I'm scared! I'm scared!"
But soon,
The street light went on.
I said, "Please don't kill me."
But I didn't know a polciman was near,
He said
"NO ONE'S going to kill you."
"But saneone frightened me!"
I will never forget
that Sunday night in the Park.

--Mabel Harris

Long ago there a bat-a-rat-and a cat the bat always hits the rat and than the cat always hits the bat. And thay always sings a soung. Like this the bat hits rat and the cat hits the bat ho-ho ho-ho-ho-ho-do-de-do do-do-do-.

--Rickey Harris

One day everybody left home,
And I was left alone.
I was scared to be there
'Cause no one was there.
Then I turned on the T.V.
And heard a song.
But the picture soon changed
A man was to be hung!

Then I was really scared
'Cause no one was there.
It was night before long
And the program changed once again
Shindig was on!
Good songs were sung.

--Earnest Hayes

When I was alone
At home alone
I found something to do alone
And in a small little home, alone
I'd spent my time all alone.

--Michael Holifield

Being alone

When I'm home alone,
I sit around the house.
And turn on the radio, and go dance about.
But once I heard strange little things,
And I got scared all at once.
Then I tip-toed around the house looking for Means,
and there, I found him knocking a pot and pan off the stove.
I said, "It's only Means my cat."
He scared me to death--
I thought it was a mouse or rat.

--Sandra Keys

My Mother is a Maid.
My Father is a butter
and I am a little rat who hangs in the street.

--Andrew McDaniel

1

One night, I had to stay
at home by myself,
and I was sad.
I said,
What is the best way to do,
When you're at home by yourself?
and I said,
I'll read the book.

Once
I walked the Lincoln Trail
And it seemed
I heard him speak to me

--Velma Madison

Once mother went downtown,
To fetch my sisters home,
She took brother
And sister Lynnette,
'Cause sister Sandy was to get
Lynnette new shoes,
Perhaps she'd buy, Kevin a pair too.
So there I was all alone,
I turned the television on,
And changed to channel two,
Television wasn't so much fun,
After awhile I thought,
What could I do?
I ran in the kitchen,
To get a drink of water,
Then came back to see channel two,
To myself I thought,
The only thing to do, when you're home alone,
Is watch television,
So you won't feel alone.

--Gylda Moore

Just Imagine!
You all by yourself
and no one to play with,
Well,
I had to do it,
I had to stay home and sit with our house.
Sister was outside
Brother was outside
Another sister was outside with baby sister,
And I was alone.
Every Body!
Every body had to go outside
Everybody but poor me
Who had to sit with a house?
Me.
Imagine,
All alone,
Without someone to play with.
I just had to sit.

--Iris Ocasio

One day I was along,
And my sister and brother weren't home
So I said to myself,
"How about playing the little elf?"

And I answered myself,
"Yah, how about playing the little elf
And then I said to myself,
"I'm not alone anymore."
And now I have a friend.
Because I'm playing the little elf
WITH ME
And myself.

--Latricia Patrick

Once when my whole family
All but me,
Went over to the Park
All but me,
I started to clean--
    mothers room,
    living room,
    dining room
    brothers' room
My room and sister's room were already clean,
I went to wash--
    dishes,
    stove, over
    and the bottom of the refrigerator,
        Yes, Yes
        My whole family went to the Park.
        All but me.

--Linda Pickett

When I came home Sick
One afternoon
I called my mather on the telephone
She said,
"Stay home, I'll soon be there."
I went in my room
And saw a book I could read,
Then I said to myself.
"I don't want to miss,
So I guess I'll go on."
I went on to school
That same afternoon

--Ronald Saulter

Being Alone

One day when I was a lone.
Then I got on the telephone
Never to be alone
And never was I alone.

--Larry Travis

Alone

One day, a long time ago.
When I was alone, I thought that the devil was going to get me,
So I went into the toilet room to see,
If tears were coming out of my eyes,
Yes, they were,
I was begining to feel alone and scared,
I begin to cry,
Just then I heard someone come in,
It was my father,
I ran and jumped on his soulders,
Then he said, "Why are you crying?
I said, "I was alone."

--Lona Wilson

i

My Girl

I took my girl friend down the street
A pretty girl, I happend to meet
I stared at her,
I wanted to purr.
I kissed her hand,
I heard a band.
But I wen mistaken, I heard my girl friend shout,
"I will through you out"
I didn't pay attention
Now that I remember, she wasn't so great,
She didn't get pay
Until the fourth May

ii

Me

I was standing on the corner
Along came my girl friend and grabbed me by the arm.
She took me around the corner and rang a little bell,

Along came a police,
She said, "This man is going to kill me"
"No he's not he your boyfriend"
All you redheaded females are KOOKEY.

--Samuel Wilson

Children's Poems

Lesson 7*

Saturday, I watched T.V.
"William Come make your bed."
I didn't hear,
So a half hour later,
"William, Come make your bed."
I know I didn't hear a sound.
And a half hour later,
"William, Come make your bed."
Was that a sound?
No, I surely was mistaken.
WILLIAM, COME MAKE YOUR BED!
Was that a whisper?
Oh yes,
Today was Saturday
Time to
MAKE THIS BED.

--William Atkinson

My meat ball

I was eating a pizza all covered with cheese
I was looking at my meat ball, until someone sneezed,
It rolled off the table and onto the floor,
It rolled a hole right through the door, my juicy meat ball had been smashed,
and that meat ball had turned to hash
I picked up that hash,
that nasty old hash, and put it in the can that was marked for trash.

--Linda Booker

Look at my brand new suit
It is really very cute,
And when I put my coat on,
My mother says to me,
"Son, you're sharp as a tack."

--Stanley Brooks

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*These poems were written on June 8, 1965.

One very, very hot summer night,
I lay in my bed, not sleepy, but fighting sleep!
And all at once I jumped out of bed
With my feet hitting the floor with a bang.

I ran to the kitchen, turned on the water halfway, filled my cup,
Put an ice cube in, drank it down,
And went back to bed and fell asleep.

But when I fell asleep,
He jumped upon me.
What was it?
I didn't know, but when I said
"Mamma!"
He said,
Bow, wow! woow.
So I gabe him one of my gaint size hugs,
And we both slept sound.

--Harriett Collins

THE POLICEMAN'S suit
by two woman.

"Look at the policeman in his new blue suit."
"Yes, it is cute."
Look at the badge, it looks like a silver bird on his chest."
"That is nice, Goodby Bess."

--Michael Covington

"I ain't goin' to do it!"
I said that over and over,
"I ain't goin' to do it!"
But it did no good,
I did it anyway, I washed the dishes.
I kept on saying,
"I didn't want to do it!"
"I didn't want to do it!"
But it did no good,
I did it anyway.

--Vanessa Gamble

Get those socks off the floor,
Put your toys in the box,
Why can't you do anything right,
Without me telling you?

I am tired, and hot,
Anyway I'll pick up my socks,
But I see some more scattered about everywhere,

And when I put my toys in the box,
Someone takes them out again.

I wish you would pick up these socks.
I am going to wash today.
Put those toys in that box,
And I mean right now!

I wish I didn't have a box for toys,
'Cause every time you look around,
You have to pick 'em up.

--Sandra Hall

Being Horrid

One day I went upstairs,
When my parents were out side.
I opened the door and stepped right in,
And straight to the kitchen I went.
We had some apple pie.
I stuck my finger in it.
Then I slipped out the door.
Then it was time to come in.
My mother said, "Come and get it,"
I was the first one up,
I had forgot about what I did.
My mother opened the refrigerator
And an angry voice said,
"Who has been eating my pie?"
I said, "I"
And she did whipped me most "emphatic."

--Carol Harris

1

"Be home before dark."
Okay, Okay.
I left home to play ball in the school yard. It got dark.
I didn't go home
And brother soon came and said
"Rosie said, Go Home!"
I stayed to play one more game,
But I heard
Ear--nest EAR--NEST!
I ran as fast as I could,
"I'll whip you."
Scared.
Nervous.
Why? Why?
Why? Should I get whipped, and not my brother?

Why by myself?
I don't know why?

ii

Saturday mornings I wake up early
Before my mother goes to work.
I dont get up,
Just lay there until
She is finished and gone.
Slowly, I leave the bed
Sit around the messed up bed
Turn on the T.V. and then--
Grandmother gets up!
"Why are those beds still like you slept in them?
Don't sit around doing what you want.
Cut the T.V. Off!
Fix your bed!
Sweep the floor.
Earnest-erella is my name.

--Earnest Hayes

Every Saturday I have a job to do,
I get up on Saturday, do nothing, but sit around the house.
But, All at once, my mother Called, Sandra, "Come fix the food!"
She looked at the house and said, "you are so crazy,
you haven't even cleaned up the floor,
You are lazy!
When you finished, I want you to fix breakfast,
For your foolish brother,"
said my dear mother.

--Sandra Keys

One time I left my coat on the bed.
"Where does the coat belong Velma?"
In the closet
"Well?"
Well, I was just going back out.

--Velma Madison

I went to bed late,
One Friday night,
I was going to awake,
Before it was daylight.
'Cause mother was going on a trip,
She was getting nervous and sick.
So I wanted to get up early,

So I could clean the house.
Mother was leaving at 2:00,
When I awoke she was gone,
I was still in the bed,
So should I get up?
I got out of bed and got the broom,
Then went in the living room,
I swept softly,
I swept lightly,
It seemed as if it still was night!
I threw the broom,
Down on the floor,
And I threw myself
Down on the couch,
And fast, I went to sleep.
This could all wait.

--Gylda Moore

When I come from reading class,
Every other day,
I run from school.
And go straight home.

But once when I got home,
I started to mumble,
I knocked on the door and grumbled,
I looked Around,
Wow! Paper, paper all over the floor.
Yvonne! Yvonne, who threw this on the floor!
I don't know? I don't know?
If Mamma comes home and she sees this paper,
Oh! what a shout she'll give out.

And then she walked through the door,
Everybody stood still.
No one said a word,
She looked at the floor,
You know the rest.

--Iris Ocasio

This morning I woke up,
Then my brother woke up,
Then mother said to my brother
"Will you PLEASE get up?"
But my brother didn't get up.

She went in the pantry
She looked on the shelf,
She went in the room and told him to get up,

And what do you think she had in her hand?
It was a rolling pin. Bang!

--Latricia Patrick

Ten times Mamma said,
"Go to the store."
By the time I got dressed,
Three more times passed.
Finally, finally, I went.
But--
The story had changed now,
"Go to the Washer, and wash the clothes"
Is what I heard.
There was no end, until--
I went to sleep.

--Linda Pickett

Three birds on our Alaska map. What ugly things, I wish they were
alive, to see what they'd do. My friend said,

"If they were alive, They'd eat people, not Fish!" I'm glad they're
not alive, 'Cause I don't want to be eaten alive.

--Eldwin Santana

One night at nine,
My mother had just
come from work.
"Son, get me my shoes,
My soft house shoes."
I ran to give her, her shoes.

And then, I saw the matches,
What if I light one--what harm would it do?
But the wind blew,
The curtains caught fire!

What did I do?
Mother came running,
In her soft house shoes,
She saved the curtains,
and the house, too!

But a part of me died that night,
When those soft house shoes warmed my ____ that night.
"Good," was all I heard,
"you'll learn this lesson Good."

--Ronald Saulter

once I asked my father for a bike.
"A bike, you can't ride a bike!
When you begin to ride, you fall to the side,
so you don't need a bike."

--Hosea Sims

Being Lazy

When its my day to wash dishes,
I always go to my mother and ask,
"Please do my dishes,"
"No dear, darling daughter"
Is all I hear,
"Don't always ask,
Do for yourself, thats always best."
"Oh, just lazy I am I guess."
"Right you are--lazy, lazy, I guess."
"But, it seems,
You wash dishes for brother Ray."
(Thats my brother's middle name)
"But he is asleep, he can't do when he's asleep."
"Asleep," I said to myself,
"I'll sleep from now on"
Lazy I guess,
Who's lazy?

--Lona Wilson

I know a girl, she is a mess--
She Won't ever wear a dress.
Her name is Lou.
Her pants are blue.
She is bad,
Her mother is sad.
She won't wear a dress--
That's a mess.
Her sister says,
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?"

--Samuel Wilson